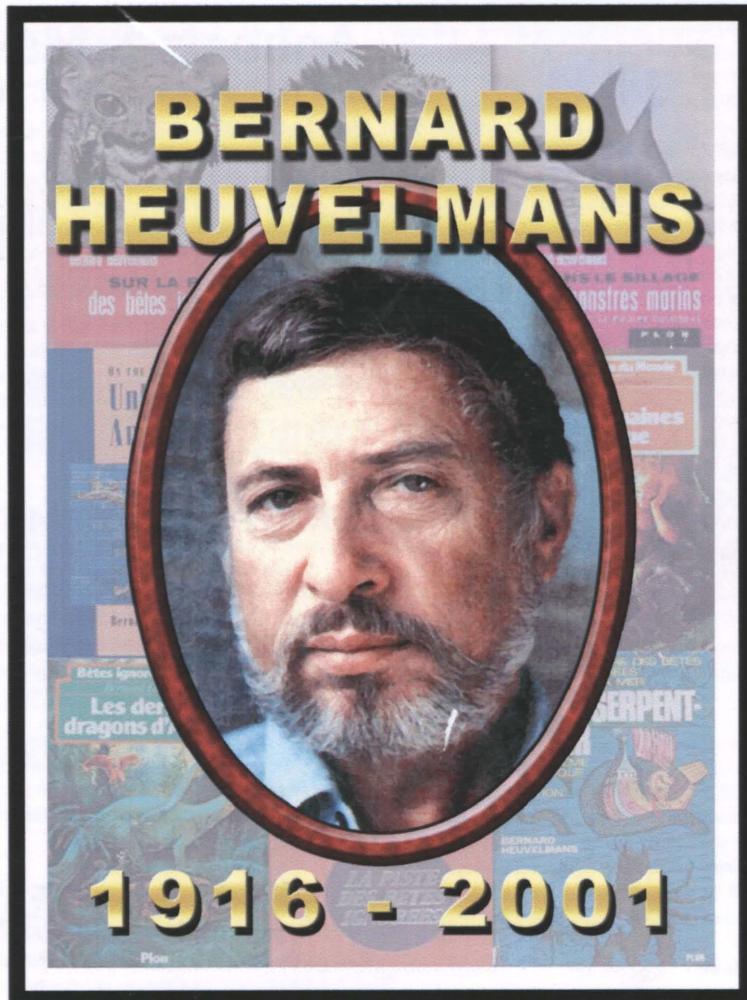


ANIMALS E MEN

THE JOURNAL OF THE CENTRE FOR FORTEAN ZOOLOGY



ISSUE TWENTY FIVE

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Animals & Men #25

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT DAYS OF ZOOLOGY ARE NOT DONE



Dear Friends,

Writing this editorial is very poignant for me because as you no doubt have heard, our Hon. Consulting Editor, Bernard Heuvelmans died a few weeks ago. Without him there would be no Centre for Fortean Zoology, and you would not be reading this magazine. The title of this editorial is even a quote from his most famous book, and although he had been in failing health for many years I always felt that he was metaphorically looking over my shoulder every time I wrote one of my editorial pieces. Bernard old friend, you will be sorely missed and I make no apologies whatsoever for having dedicated such a great part of this, our twenty fifth edition to your memory. The only apology I will make is for not having included all the tributes to him that we were sent. However if I had done so they would quite literally have filled the next three issues!

He was not always the easiest of men to get along with. I had more than one argument with him over the years, but he was a great man, and my life, at least has been enriched for having known him.

But life goes on.

This magazine hasn't had a real makeover since the second issue, and I would like to proffer my heartfelt thanks to Mark North for his sterling work in redesigning the whole layout of the magazine. In the words of Derek Smalls ... We hope you like our new direction.

Next year is our tenth anniversary and we are planning several things to celebrate the fact. After months of planning, the first two volumes of collected editions of this magazine, encompassing the first ten issues, are now available. They include the full text of the original issues with a new introductory essay and notes.

We hope that they will be a valuable addition to the bookshelf of any fortean zoologist.

We have also just published the third edition of *The Owlman and Others* now with the original artwork restored and much new information which was not available when I originally wrote the book back in 1996. Finally we are planning that our third annual *Weird Weekend* which will be held in Exeter in May 2002 will have a special cryptozoological theme in order to celebrate our tenth anniversary. We hope that as many of you as possible decide to join us for the fun.

Watch this space



Jon Downes
(Director, Centre for Fortean Zoology)



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NEWSFILE

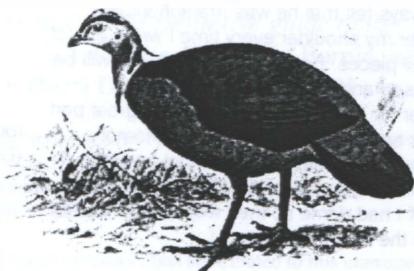
Compiled this issue by Jon and Richard with stupid comments from John-John and Dave the Drummer

NEW AND REDISCOVERED



COLD TURKEY HAS GOT ME ON THE RUN

Anyone conversant with the CFZ's taste for gallows humour will not be surprised to hear that whilst the following story is tragic, we also find it rather funny. According to the *Daily Telegraph* of the 6th August 2001 a Bruijn's brush-turkey - a species not seen alive for sixty years - was caught in the heavily forested interior of the tiny island of Waigeo, off north-west New Guinea, by hunters after wild pigs. They promptly ate it. But after they had dined, another man recognised the remains and told the villagers the bird was "wanted".



The men injected the discarded head with formaldehyde normally used to preserve Birds of Paradise and kept the bones to give to the World Pheasant Association (WPA). It has an interest because the bird, which was thought to be extinct, is related to pheasants and other game birds. Two scientists from Holland mounted a painstaking, three-day search, but there were no further sightings of the bird. However, a distant bird-call was identified as that of a brush-turkey. Keith Howman, president of the WPA, said yesterday: "We are excited that a species believed to have been extinct appears to have been found, but obviously this particular bird may not have been quite as happy about things."

"It is in the nature of things that game birds tend to get eaten, but the find on Waigeo gives hope that other birds might be around." He said the bird's remains were in Holland undergoing tests to confirm its identity, and would be returned to a museum in Waigeo.

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JUNGLE BUNNY

On the 26th June the Indonesian National Parks service announced a sighting of the highly endangered Sumatra jungle rabbit (*Nesolagus netscherii*). The park's chief, Susilo Legowo, told Antara the rabbit was spotted by one of the surveillance cameras installed across the park.

SHARK SHAMBLES

Confusion surrounded the announcement by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation on the 2nd July that a new species of the spear-tooth shark had been found in the Kakadu National Park and the Adelaide River. They announced that live samples of the *Glypthis* or spear species were collected and X-rayed and have been classified as *Glypthis* type A and C. The Northern Territory Museum's Dr Helen Larson, says the only other recorded live capture of the *Glypthis* type A shark was in the Bizant River in North Queensland almost two decades ago. She said that the museum will work with fish experts in Hobart and South Africa to develop descriptions of the fish so scientists can study them. "What's here in the Northern Territory is the last remnants of an undescribed fish...in other words it is an endangered fish," Dr Larson said. "They are technically very vulnerable endangered fishes."

However just as the boys of the CFZ were raising their glasses to the healthy discovery of this interesting new elasmobranch (any excuse d000d) Ben Roesch wrote to explain that this wasn't a new discovery after all. "These species—species A and C—have been known for a while, so this is technically not a new species, but rather new specimens which will allow a proper description. Just nitpicking to solve any possible confusion about these and the new *Glypthis* mentioned a couple years back (they are the same). Neat sharks nonetheless!"

He wrote again a few days later:

"Despite the press's cock-up in this case, a few actual new shark species are described most years, mostly deep-water catsharks and dogsharks.

CHILI CHUPA

Although we have always considered that chupacabra reports are very much within the demesne of zoiform phenomena rather than within the realm of bona fide unknown animals there are some interesting aspects to this following report that warrant it being included in this section of the newsfile.

According to the website

<http://ufomiami.homestead.com/Fraganti.html> which was sadly out of service as we went to press. A resident of Villa San Rafael in Calama, Chile, reported an encounter with a mysterious creature, on Friday May 4th, 2001, at around about seven in the evening. He found his two small dogs barking at a strange looking creature. The animal was very small; it measured no more than 40 cm tall. This young resident was astounded before the presence of such strange little animal. Nevertheless, during the short amount of time he was able to watch it, he noticed several description details.

He described the creature as very shy, their dogs tried to bite him, but it defended itself with loud screeches, also by opening its mouth, which showed two long teeth in the upper part of the mouth and two smaller ones on the lower jaw. Also, he assured that it stretched a long tongue of about 25 cm of length. The tongue had two tips very similar to a tongue of a snake. The inside of its mouth had a dark green colour. He was also able to notice that the creature had very little hair, as if it was a new-born. Although he wasn't able to determine whether it was a male or female, he saw a small scrotum that appeared to be filled with liquid. Lastly, the resident told us that the small animal had a strong scent, such as the one found in sewage.

As the resident found the creature fighting for its life and completely filled with panic, while watching it so desperate as one of his dogs was almost able to bite one of its legs off, he observed it was able to defend itself by raising its paws to avoid the fatal bite. Shortly afterwards, the small creature began to violently jump from side to side, almost hurting itself by hitting a metallic fruit container and the kitchen sink. Suddenly, when seeing that the door of the kitchen was open, the little creature rushed to the patio, situation that the resident tried to avoid by closing the door quickly, but it was already too late because he was only able to grab its left leg. As he watch the creature get away, he look at its hand and he noticed that he was able to pull some hair

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from the leg area. He then saw it running away towards the neighbour's house until he lost sight of it.

"According to the witness's mother only a couple of days earlier, this same being was spotted on the roof of the laundry room in the back, and that she saw it jump on a mesh that they use for shading, which collapsed notably when the creature landed on top of it. She thought to have seen the creature walking with a certain level of disorientation and clumsiness. After inspecting the mesh and the roof, another small quantity of hair was obtained, which was exactly similar to the previous ones.

THAT PETREL EMOTION

The ornithological journal Emu announced a number of new species in its latest issue.

* Imber & Tennyson, on pages 123-27, proposes a new petrel, *Pterodroma occulta*, which "is close to *P.cervicalis* but differs mainly in its smaller size, relatively longer tail and entirely dark grey exposed primaries ventrally." The citation is *Pterodroma occulta* M. J. Imber and A.J.D.Tennyson, 2001, Emu, 101(2), p.126. (collected at 14deg.27' S, 168deg.30'E.) The suggested English name is Vanuatu Petrel. Under Range: it states "Presumably breeds in the Banks Islands, or elsewhere in northern Vanuatu. Has reached the northeast coast of Australia during the probably breeding season and likely to be a transequatorial migrant after breeding."

* The other new species (splits) are contained in the paper by Wee Ming Boon, C.H.Daugherty and G.K.Chambers, " The Norfolk Island Green Parrot and New Caledonian Red-crowned Parakeet are distinct species." This paper used mtDNA sequencing, based on a 2.5 kb segment of the mitochondrial genome. The target region is flanked by the 3' end of the ND6 and 5' end of the 12S rRNA genes. The tRNA-Phe and tRNA-Glu genes plus the control regions are located between the flanking ND6 and 12S rRNA genes.

Their analysis found "that the Norfolk Island Green Parrot, previously *C.n.cooki*, and New Caledonian Red-crowned Parakeet, previously *C.n.saisaetti*, are highly divergent from all other members of the genus.

SYMPATHY 4 THE DEVIL

The Mercury of Hobart, Tasmania burst the news of a tantalising new cryptozoological mystery upon an unsuspecting world on the 19th August 2001 when it announced that scientists are investigating the possibility of a remnant mainland population of Tasmanian devils.

The ferocious-sounding carnivorous marsupial which was the inspiration for Warner Brothers' *Taz the Devil* cartoon may still roam Victoria. Four dead Tasmanian devils are held by the Victorian Museum. Believed found only in Tasmania, these devils were found at different times and in different locations in Victoria.

Scientists at La Trobe University are undertaking DNA testing to establish whether the devils are from a remnant Victorian population or escapees from Tasmania.

* In 1912 a live Tasmanian devil was captured at Tooborac north of Melbourne in Victoria. The skin and skeleton were preserved in the National Museum of Victoria. It was largely presumed the animal had been taken to Victoria from Tasmania and escaped.

* In 1971 another devil was found in Western Victoria
* In 1991 two Tasmanian devils were discovered as roadkills - one near Bendigo and the other 150 kilometres away.

The specimens were preserved and catalogued by the Mammalogy Department of the Museum of Melbourne.

Victorian author and historian Bob Paddle has been one of the few scientists to seriously entertain the notion of a remnant population of Tasmanian devils in Victoria.

In his award-winning book, *The Last Tasmanian Tiger: the history and extinction of the thylacine*, he reveals many historic reports of Tasmanian devils in Victoria.

"Records of the Tasmanian devil on the mainland in Victoria date back to that colony's first establishment...until now no recent professional zoologist has been prepared to face up to the evidence...and proudly claim in publication the extension of the Tasmanian devil's distribution to Victoria to this day".

Dr Paddle says there have been some scientists seriously consider the presence of mainland Tasmanian devils but most refer to sub-fossil devil material which suggests the

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last to roam the mainland was about 430 years ago.

Dr Paddle has found 19th century references to Tasmanian devils in Victoria, NSW and South Australia. In 1896 the Adelaide Observer noted that "a colony of Tasmanian bears" was still living around Lake Albert. La Trobe university geneticist Neil Murray, the scientist charged with finding out, thinks the Tasmanian devils found in Victoria were captives from Tasmania.

"I differ from Bob on this," he admitted. "I tend to think they've more likely been brought across deliberately by people or accidentally". Dr Murray said he was hopeful a good sample of DNA from the Tasmanian devil museum specimens would prove conclusively whether the devils were from a remnant mainland population. He said La Trobe had tried to prove the notion one way or another last year but its DNA samples had not been good enough and the results inconclusive.

La Trobe University has been involved in a series of research projects looking into native animals including the tiger quoll and eastern barred bandicoot. "The difference between mainland populations and Tasmanian populations was marked," he said. DNA from a remnant population of Tasmanian devils on the mainland and those from the island state of Tasmania were expected to display marked differences.

BIG CATS



EDITOR'S NOTE: We have received a plethora of British Big Cat sightings over the past few months – almost too many to list. We are

presently discussing with several of the big cat research organisation in the UK about setting up an interdisciplinary journal of British Big Cat studies. Hopefully there will be more news about this in the next issue. Until then, the Big Cat section of the Newsfile is devoted to Australian and US creatures....

IN THE FLAT FIELD

Our old mucker Nick Redfern, he of the gleaming pate and beautiful new wife, is always telling us what gems can be unearthed from the dusty files which contain government documents. I suppose we shouldn't have been surprised therefore when the *Sunday Tasmanian* of the 1st July announced that Australian Government documents showed that wildlife authorities were so concerned about the potential danger to people after sightings over the last twenty years in Toowoomba, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns and St George, they set traps. These dark-coloured creatures have been blamed for the deaths of livestock and native animals. The latest sightings were in May 2001 at Mareeba, near Cairns. Environmental Protection Agency officers set traps in the far north Queensland town to try to catch the creature. Officer Brent Vincent confirmed in a letter that he had to set up "snares along fence lines" after farmers in Mareeba reported seeing a "large cat-like animal".

"A farmer was walking with his dog when the dog suddenly darted ahead and dived into the scrub," he wrote. "Suddenly he heard a yelp and his dog, who is very tough, went into full flight to the homestead. The next morning I checked and noticed one of the farmer's mango trees had been stripped. "I noticed claw marks and teeth marks on a branch at a height close to the top of my head ... I'm 6ft [1.8m] tall. I don't know what caused the marks, but they were not from a normal cat."

Farmers have reported more than 40 sightings since the late 1980s. The animal was blamed for bites on horses, attacks on dogs and stock kills.

The *Sydney Sunday Herald* added that a Sunshine Coast resident recently told investigators she had spotted what she thought was a cheetah. "The animal had an elongated body and powerful hind legs," she said. "It had a long bushy tail with the face and body of a cheetah, but no spots. Its body colour was almost orange." A 1997 memo by senior conservation officer Bruce Thompson detailed

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sightings of "big cats" in the Toowoomba region. "A man reported he spotted what he thought was a panther," he said. "He said he drove up to it, and noticed it was standing higher than the bonnet of the car."

An EPA spokeswoman said the beasts most likely were dogs.

A PLAGUE OF LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS

The Eastern Cougar raised its graceful head again on the 22nd June when *The Detroit News* reported that there have been more than 100 reported cougar sightings in the Upper Peninsula and parts of the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan in recent years. A quiet controversy has taken root with the alleged sightings and a recent report released by the Michigan Wildlife Habitat Foundation.

Patrick J. Rusz Ph.D., director of wildlife programs for the MWHF, prepared a 66-page report, suggesting that cougars - also known as mountain lions - might be returning to Michigan. The cougar was thought to have been eliminated in Michigan by early 1900s. Ray Rustem of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources said there has been no physical evidence to support the recent claims.

"There are some people in the Upper Peninsula who have reported cougar sightings, but from our perspective we haven't been able to verify any cougars in Michigan," said Rustem, supervisor of the DNR's Natural Heritage Unit. "Some of the sightings seem fairly credible and have been reported by people who should be able to identify between a cougar and a bobcat, but there is no evidence of a sustained population."

"We might have some remnant population or there may be transient animals from Minnesota, which does have a population of cougars. We have a couple examples of collared wolves from the east end of the U.P. that ended up on the Canadian-Minnesota border, and another that was road-killed on the Wisconsin border. So it's not unusual for these animals to roam great distances."

Rusz noted in his report that wolves, lynx and moose were also once considered species no longer found in the state. All three species currently exist in Michigan. Cougars once roamed freely throughout Michigan, including southeastern Michigan, from 1835 to 1870. The last recorded cougar kill in the state was recorded in December 1906. The cougar is on the Michigan endangered species list in Michigan and is protected under law.

"We're trying to find out a little more before we can actually say that a population does exist," Rustem said. "We don't really have any good hair samples to substantiate that we do have cougars. As a result of this report and discussions with the (MWHF), we collected hair samples and they were bobcat and bear, but there were no lynx or cougar hairs. Hikers and campers have been attacked by cougars and bears in the western United States.

"In Michigan, we haven't come close to anybody being attacked or even threatened by a cougar, as far as I know," Rustem said.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A copy of Rusz's report on cougars can be accessed at the Michigan Wildlife Habitat Foundation's Web site at:
www.mwhf.org.Special

MAN BEASTS



FUNKY GIBBON

What is possibly the most exciting cryptozoological news for many years was reported in most British newspapers

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on the 31st October 2001. The fact that it was Hallowe'en dampened its impact a bit because the papers are always full of quasi fortean snippets at this time of year, but the fact remains that it is of potentially earth shattering importance.

A British team have discovered a footprint and hair samples of a primate thought to be the orang pendek deep in the jungles of western Sumatra. A cast of the footprint and strands of coarse hair are being sent to research institutes at Oxford University and the University of Canberra in Australia for verification.

The *Daily Express* claimed that "If the finds are substantiated they could provide valuable scientific clues to an unidentified creature which may hold the key to the missing link between humans and apes." This is probably untrue because all the available suggests that the Orang Pendek is some rare creature allied to the gibbons, but it is still astounding news.

Andrew Sanderson, 30, from Jesmond in Newcastle upon Tyne, Adam Davies, 33, from Stockport, and Keith Towley, from Macclesfield, both in Cheshire, spent three weeks in the rainforests tracking a creature that local people call Orang Pendek, meaning "Little Man of the Forest."

Sightings on the island describe the creature as being 5ft tall with brown, orange hair. Its distinguishing feature is its human-like gait, walking upright on its back legs without the aid of its front fists.

Adam Davies, an Internet project manager from Manchester, led the expedition to the mountain rainforest near Gunung Kerinci, in western Sumatra. "We are getting indications from the scientists that we may be on to something, and I have no doubt myself that this creature exists," he said. "We heard its calls, and we've discovered a trail that can't be explained by anything else."

Cryptozoologist Mr Sanderson said: "Over the years there have been many sightings of the yeti, but no one has actually come up with any concrete evidence. We seem to be the first people to do that. We didn't see the creature but we tracked it for several weeks. The plaster cast of one of its footprints is absolutely perfect and experts are already beginning to get excited about it."

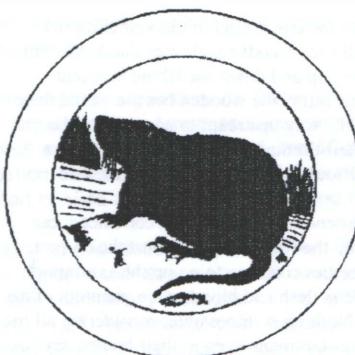
Watch this space!

ONTARIO'S ANTHROPOIDS

On the 25th June Reuters announced a series of Bigfoot reports in northern Ontario. Residents of a native Indian reserve 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles) north of Toronto have discovered 35-centimetre long (14-inch) footprints, the newspaper said. "It's definitely not a bear," said Abraham Hunter, chief of the 260-member band. This is not the first Bigfoot report at the reserve. Two elders claim to have spotted the creature 20 years ago, Hunter said, and stories about it have been told for hundreds of years. "These things happen all the time, but we're surprised because we underestimate the power of imagination and the power of belief," Laurence Kirmayer, director of McGill University's division of social and transcultural psychiatry, told the paper. Such sightings are typically cultural-specific, he said.

On June 14, a government officer with 31 years of experience also came across an odd-looking track 150 kilometres (95 miles) east of the reserve, the newspaper said. "I couldn't explain what it was. I naturally thought it might be Bigfoot because of the shape of it," he told the Post. Tales of a huge apelike creature are not unusual in Canada. In the western Rocky Mountain regions of British Columbia reports of a mysterious ape-man called Sasquatch - similar to the Yeti of the Himalayas - have existed for generations.

OUT OF PLACE



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KRAUT KROK

One of the weirdest stories of the year appeared in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* on the 5th July 2001 when a climax was reached in the ongoing hunt for a mystery crocodile. The reptile lay, reportedly dead and in a state of rigor mortis, in Geisenheim in the Rheingau area. But the croc turned out to be made of wood and was nothing more than an absolutely real-looking, handmade imitation of its leathery cousin.

Police in the German states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse had devoted many boats and man-hours on a series of summertime wild crocodile chases. The phantom reptile that was reportedly repeatedly spotted swimming down the Rhine has kept police on the move on land, in the water and in the air. Local governments like the one in Mainz-Bingen have issued warnings to "citizens who are seeking to refresh themselves" in the Rhine to look out for crocodiles who may also be refreshing themselves there.

Now finally the croc has turned up - or at least, a croc has turned up. Made of wood, two metres long, its back still coated with tree bark that could pass for scaly skin when wet. Police think a woodshop worker turned out the drifting reptile. He - or she - even tried to make the wooden lizard seaworthy... or Rhine-worthy at least, fitting it out with metal counterweights and a plastic bucket of sandy ballast hooked to its belly. But the Geisenheimer Croc - it got its name from the town where it was found - went into the Rhine at the wrong place and at the wrong time.

The police say the croc found in Geisenheim can't account for all the crocodile sightings that have come drifting in from up and down the Rhine in recent weeks. For one thing, the wooden beastie would have had to paddle its way upstream to account for the sighting of a tail-thumping crocodile reported by a thoroughly serious ship's crew near Bingen.

No wooden crocodile, the police are convinced, can float its way up the Rhine River against the current. And so, authorities continue to go on the assumption that the reptile is flesh and blood, not a phantom of the imagination. Nothing is impossible, considering all the exotic creatures Germans keep in their homes, says a police spokesman. The hunt continues, with area police keeping an extra eye out for the crocodile while patrolling their regular beats.

NICKED CAYMAN

It was a summer for crocodiles because the *New York Daily News* on the 21st June 2001 carried the headline: '**Alligator Man' Gets Go-Ahead To Hunt for Reptile In Central Park'**. The story wasn't as exiting as it sounded and apparently concerned an eighteen inch baby crocodilian which turned out to be a spectacled caiman which had been sighted in a lake in the park.

It was filmed and photographed and a team of specialists even came up from Florida in an attempt to capture the elusive saurian, and was eventually caught the next day. It was the latest in a long run of New York crocodilian sightings which have taken place in recent years.

- June 15 2000 Alligator is found in Richmond Creek on Staten Island
- June 29, 1997, Alligator is found in Brooklyn yard
- Aug 4th 2001 another turned up in a cardboard box at a special United Parcel Service center in Brooklyn

They are all, as far as we can tell, escaped pets and there is no evidence whatsoever of either a burgeoning population of introduced crocodilians in the big apple or any animals big enough to cause any harm to humans. Sadly, none of them are in the sewers...

CAIMAN GEDDIT?

But still those kooky krokodile reports keep coming. On the 19th July, *Ananova* which is rapidly becoming an invaluable tool for fortean research, reported that yet another caiman had turned up. This time in Vienna. Apparently, tourists strolling along the Danube were startled to see a young alligator sunning itself on the riverbank.

Firefighters surrounded the reptile and managed to capture it before it could slip back into the water. It was taken to Schoenbrunn Zoo, where experts identified it as a two-foot caiman. Zoo spokeswoman Barbara Koch said the alligator, estimated to be between one and two years old, was in good condition.

But there's more....

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CROC SHOCK

But still the saurian tales keep on coming....

The twin lakes, Mary and Elizabeth, have many tales to tell. Like other inland Wisconsin lakes, most are fish stories. On July 22 a new classic was born with the discovery of a small alligator on the shores of Lake Elizabeth.

"I couldn't believe it when the call came in. I was investigating a 911 hang-up, and the dispatcher said a woman called and said there was an alligator in her back yard on Lake Shore Way on Lake Elizabeth. I thought it would be anything but an alligator. I figured it would be a lawn ornament someone put there as a joke, or sea weed or anything," Officer Randy Prudik said Monday.

"But Sgt. (Tim) Shuda arrived at the scene before me and all I heard him say on the radio was, 'Yep, it's an alligator all right.'"

Luckily for the officers, the three-foot swamp dweller was in an alleyway between a fence and wall.

"I borrowed some garden gloves and Shuda had a rope. We came in from each end and the alligator tried to run past me and I grabbed him by the tail, like that guy on TV," Prudik said. "He was really fast and all I kept thinking was, boy, I sure hope my arm is long enough," Prudik said, demonstrating how the alligator tried to reach back and bite him.

The alligator took his frustrations out on a rope hanging nearby and once he clapped his powerful jaws around it, Prudik wrapped his hands around the alligator's snout.

The alligator was transported in a cardboard box that was taped shut, and once at the police station the officers placed him in a large metal kennel usually used for stray cats. The base of the kennel has a lip a few inches tall. The officers filled that with water to keep their reptilian friend happy.

From what Prudik has been able to piece together, it appears that someone purchased the alligator when it was small. At three feet and with an appetite that keeps growing, police are guessing the pet owner released the alligator in the lake. "For now he would have been fine. But once the water temperatures

dropped, he would have died," Prudik said.

Prudik called the Milwaukee Zoo to see if they would accept an unsolicited donation of the reptile kind, but apparently abandoned alligators aren't as rare as you think.

"They turned it down flat. I am now waiting for a call from the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago. If they don't want it, I have a guy in Mequon who owns an exotic pet store who said he would take it, not to sell, but to raise. He already has one alligator," Prudik said.

Adam Aringer, an employee at Critter Dave's Pets and Pond, located at 955 S. Main St., Mequon, said they have a spot for the Lake Elizabeth alligator if it needs a home.

Aringer said Dave Schnieder, the store owner, has one alligator that is about one foot long and is kept in a 125-gallon tank. "We have room and will just keep moving it into larger spaces as it grows," he said.

Aringer said he too has heard of alligators being abandoned once they get too big. "Sometimes people will find a baby alligator when they are on vacation in Florida and bring it home. But before too long, it starts to grow and the next thing you know it's getting aggressive and they just can't handle it."

"No matter what kind of environment they are raised in, they will get aggressive, it's what they do, it's who they are," he said.

Because he has not seen the Lake Elizabeth gator, Aringer said he does not know for certain what kind it is. "We have what is known as an American alligator. It will grow to be eight to 12 feet long and probably weigh 500 pounds. Right now it is small and eats mice and raw chicken. Eventually, during a two-week period, it will eat portions as large as a goat."

BUT WOULD YOU BELIEVE THERE'S MORE?

- *The Montgomery Journal, Maryland*
26 July 2001 reported a 3-foot alligator in a Fort Washington creek.
- A four foot specimen turned up in a lake near Buffalo, NY

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- WYFF News 23rd June reported alligators from Lake Hartwell to Lake Bowen, in North Carolina.
- Evansville Courier & Press Evansville, Indiana Sunday, July 15, 2001 reported up to three 'gators in the Wabash river.
- Detroit News 17 July 2001 reported a 3 1/2-foot alligator discovered two weeks before in a retention pond across the street from Four Bears Water Park on Auburn Road in Shelby.

EIBRAH HORROR OF THE DEEP



He said it probably drifted several thousand kilometres south as a larva on warm ocean currents before finding a spot to establish itself off Northland. "We've heard of them in the Kermadec Islands before but this is the first record of one in mainland New Zealand." Dr Booth said the lobster was the largest type of slipper lobster and could grow to about half a metre in length. It probably fed on shellfish and whatever other high protein things it could find. He said the lobster appeared to be an adult female but doubted it had been able to breed here because of the lack of suitable mates. "They are extremely rare and the numbers are so low as to be of no consequence."

The *New Zealand Herald* on July 7th 2001 reported a particularly strange visitor to the area.

A lobster described as being "too ugly to eat" has been identified as a tropical species which had "hitch-hiked its way to New Zealand". Divers found the strange

lobster, which has bony plates at the front instead of antennae and large bumps on its back, nearly a year before while crayfishing in a cave about 30m underwater at the Whangarei Heads.

They had planned to eat it but decided it was too ugly and took it to the Whangarei Museum of Fishes instead. Museum owner George Campbell said he initially thought it was a mutant Spanish lobster, which are found in New Zealand waters but are much smaller. However, marine biologist Dr John Booth, from the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, has now identified it as a *Scyllarides haanii*, otherwise known as a humpbacked slipper lobster, which is most commonly found in tropical regions.

LAKE AND SEA MONSTERS



NESSIE? MESSY

During the summer of 2001 Luigi Piccardi, a researcher from Florence, announced to several newspapers that he had solved the riddle of the Loch Ness Monster. Nessie is simply the happy combination of geological instability and a prehistoric tradition of fear. The same explanation goes for the Oracle at Delphi in Greece and almost any sacred site in the ancient world associated with dragons or weird forces, says Luigi Piccardi, a researcher from

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Florence. 'Veneration of these places may have been the result of people seeing unusual phenomena there,' Dr Piccardi said at a conference on earth system processes in early July. 'These may have been gas and flame emissions, underground roaring, shaking and rupture of the ground. Of course, the Aegean is a very seismic area, so the association may be coincidental. But I think it can also be seen in less earthquake prone areas.' The Great Glen fault running under Loch Ness is one of the major fault lines in the UK. It is still active. In 1901 it was the site of a magnitude 5 earthquake. There are dozens of so-called 'sightings' of Nessie every year, but no clear evidence has ever emerged from the deep loch.

The recipe for a monster requires several ingredients, Dr Piccardi argues. Besides an active geological fault, there must be a civilisation with the gift for making and preserving myths. 'In Greece, in Italy, in Turkey, and all the Mediterranean, these conditions are easily found, and there are many faults at which there are myths and dragons,' he said. 'In Britain you only have this one myth because there are many fewer faults. This is almost the only fault so clearly expressed on the surface.'

Seismic faults were associated with shaking earth and subterranean rumbling and roaring. Sometimes flames and gases were emitted from the chasms or ruptures in the earth. Such gases were likely to include hydrogen sulphide and carbon dioxide. This last is toxic and even lethal in sufficient proportions. It can, he said, create the illusion of a 'high' or even visions linked with the mysteries of Delphi. Subterranean trembling and gas discharges would also cause Loch Ness to churn.

'It must not be forgotten that this spotting of the monster derives from the prehistoric mood,' said Dr Piccardi. 'The prehistoric mood created the monster. After that, it was reprisal.'

WHAT A PALTRY BEAST...

In January 2001 a strange beast was washed up on the delightfully named Palty Beach in Newfoundland. "The hair is the biggest puzzle," says Ed Hodder, the fishermen who found it. "What's hair doing on any kind of our fish?" Hodder, 42, has the lone shanty on

the beach, a shack he often stays in to be closer to his cod and flounder nets. One Saturday he steered his boat to shore and spied what he thought was an overturned dory. Only it wasn't a boat, but a creature. Measuring about seven metres in length and covered in coarse white hair the length of an average man's hand, it looked like nothing he'd ever seen before. "I'd say it weighs three or four tonne," said Hodder, 59, who's spent as much of his life on the sea as off. The "monster" has what appears to be a skeletal structure consisting of a backbone and ribs, although it's impossible to tell which end is which. There's no obvious head and only a suggestion of limbs. Flaps of flesh on either side could just as well be ears as fins. The stench of rot has made the hardiest of fishermen retch. No seagulls fly here.

"The Loch Ness monster, that's what we've got," said Terry Hodder, another inshore fisherman from St. Bernard's who sailed to Paltry early Tuesday to see the creature for himself. "It's no joke — sure there it is on the beach for anyone to see." Unfortunately we have not been able to locate any clear photographs but it seems almost certain from the ones that we have managed to find and from the description that the carcass, like so many others over the years, is that of a large, decomposing basking shark.



Fisherman Gerard Hackett examines remains of an unknown sea creature that washed up near the Fortune Bay fishing community in Newfoundland.

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LOCH NESS UPDATE

Thanks to our old mate Mark Frazer for the following Nessie sightings from the past year:

- **5 August 2001**
An Aberdeen man was watching the loch from Fort Augustus at around 9pm. He saw a large black form rise from the water and remain visible for around 5 seconds. A smaller black hump then appeared close to the first before disappearing.
- **5 May 2001**
James Gray from Invermoriston took a series of five picture showing a head and neck coming out of the water near the Invermoriston bay. The creature was about 30m from his boat and quickly disappeared below the surface of the water.
- **10 January 2001**
Dougie Barbour from Glasgow took pictures of a wake moving against the current from a layby near the Clansman Hotel during the mid afternoon.

WIND UP WORKING IN A GAS STATION

The *Kelowna Globe and Mail* for Wednesday, August 22, 2001 reported that Don Basaraba, a 20 year old whose career involves dispensing petrol and renting Jet Skis has taken some video of the legendary Lake Monster Oogopogo of Lake Okanagan.

When the five-minute sequence begins, Mr. Basaraba is at the wheel of a power boat on Okanagan Lake. It's around 11 a.m. on July 9, and he's helping a few buddies drag a broken Jet Ski back to the marina. They're nearing the dock when one of his friends spots a serpentine shape about 800 metres behind them in the deep lake. Mr. Basaraba stops the boat, turns on his camera, and zooms in on the slender, writhing, seven-metre-long creature.

"My buddy is saying, 'That's no fish, that's no fish,' " Mr. Basaraba said. "And it definitely wasn't a wave. The top was black and there was white underneath. It was shiny, like it had scales or something. It just wiggled like a snake."

Stories have been told for centuries about a mysterious creature, nicknamed Oogopogo, inhabiting the depths of the 100-kilometre long lake in B.C.'s Interior. Many people who squinted at Mr. Basaraba's shaky footage aren't convinced it's final proof that the legends are true. But it is considered one of the strongest entries as a year-long contest to find evidence of Oogopogo finishes at the end of this month.

"There's certainly something there," said John Singleton, executive director of the Kelowna Visitor and Convention Bureau. His association took out a \$2-million insurance policy from Lloyds of London last year and guaranteed the money to anyone who could provide "indisputable evidence" that Oogopogo exists.

The bureau has received three submissions so far. In addition to Mr. Basaraba's tape, there's a snapshot taken by an area resident in 1994 and sonar readings recorded by a Japanese television production company that scoured the lake with a submersible device for three days this spring.

The British insurance company has yet to appoint a panel of judges, Mr. Singleton said, but he's doubtful any of the entries would convince them. "It's a pretty stringent contest with two million bucks on the line," Mr. Singleton said. He noted that the 1994 photographs probably won't be considered because the rules only allow evidence found this year. "But what's interesting is how the video looks a lot like the photographs," he said.

Mr. Singleton frankly describes the contest as a publicity stunt. Promotional materials and the insurance premium cost only \$30,000, he said, and the contest has drawn the attention of at least 30 broadcasters in six countries. Cartoon drawings of Oogopogo appear on noodle boxes, watches and the jerseys of area sports teams.

"We wanted to bring notoriety to our region," Mr. Singleton said. "We've had a lot of fun with it."

A Indian band protested against the contest when it was announced last summer, saying it shows disrespect for a figure in their mythology. For his part, Mr. Basaraba isn't overly excited about his discovery. He went wakeboarding on the lake just hours after recording the video. Originally from Saskatchewan, he said he simply can't stay away from the water. "We were a bit sketchy about going out on the lake again," Mr. Basaraba said. "But the thing wasn't really that big."

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ATTACKS AND FINALLY...

RAVEN' MAD

The new century began well for us forteans on January 24th with a glowiously silly story from Pace del Mela, a village near Messina in Italy.

BBC News 24 announced that a crow had snatched half a million lire from a Sicilian who was withdrawing money from an ATM (automated teller machine), and carabinieri police are on the bird's trail. As the banknotes emerged from the 'hole in the wall' in Pace del Mela village near Messina, the bird swooped and flew away with the banknotes - equivalent to about £170 or \$220 - before the customer, a 40-year-old accountant, could do anything. Bank staff confirmed his story.

Police think the bird was trained to steal. A man with a pet crow had been seen earlier.

RADIOACTIVE TOY

The downside of the successful conservation of the Osprey in Scotland was announced by *The Electronic Telegraph* on Monday 5 February 2001. One of the birds - ringed on the shores of Loch Awe, south-east of Oban in Argyll, in the summer of 1998 - met its bizarre end during the annual migration to West Africa.

A fisherman, Doudou Ndong, killed a crocodile near the village of Missirah Nding, 200 miles inland on the Gambia river late last year. When he cut it open he found the osprey's ring - number 1351673 - in its stomach and sent the details to the return address.

The ringer, Dave Anderson, said yesterday: "It is usually a thrill to hear about one of the birds we have ringed so far away but this is very sad news."

On the 12th June 2001 *The Electronic Telegraph* noted the most outrageous piece of self-righteous censorship ever to have been foisted upon the British public. ITV took it upon themselves to censor one of the best-loved post-war British films.

It expunged the name of Nigger, the famous black labrador owned by the Dam Busters leader Guy Gibson, from the film version of the bombing raid.

Wing Commander Gibson's dog played an important role in both the 1943 raid on the Ruhr dams and the classic war film that celebrated it. His name was used as the codeword for the bombers' main target in the raid, while in one of the film's more poignant moments, Gibson is told he has been run over and killed by a car.

However, when the 1954 film - starring Michael Redgrave and Richard Todd - was screened on ITV on Saturday afternoon, all mention of the dog's name had been edited out.

ITV and Granada, which had been responsible for ensuring the film complied with broadcasting standards, said they wanted to avoid offending viewers. They pointed to recent research by broadcasting regulators which suggested viewers nowadays regarded "nigger" as one of the most offensive words in the English language.

An ITV spokesman said the network was inundated with complaints over an unedited version of the film in 1999 but had yet to receive any complaints about the censored film.

Surely this goes to prove that the world has gone completely mad, and that probably the only sane people left here, at least in the wonderful world of the media are us at the CFZ.

<exit Jon and Richard with a wry laugh>

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NEWSFILE

XTRA: THYLACINE ROUNDUP

EDITOR'S NOTE: We received a flurry of newspaper reports about the Thylacine during the year and as many of them took widely differing viewpoints it seemed sensible to try and gather them together here....

On the 24th May The Mercury (Hobart) announced that the State Government of Tasmania had officially decreed that their state animal was extinct. Because of this, there would be no government funded research into the putative survival of an animal which though supposedly extinct since 1936 has been seen so many times since that there are few zoologists in the world who can make a convincing case against its continued survival both on Tasmania and on the mainland. However, Leader for the Government in the Upper House, Michael Aird, said it supported "responsible" search efforts. Mr Aird said the official view of extinction was based on there being no hard evidence of the tiger's survival for 50 years – the accepted international criteria. He said official records had been systematically kept since the 1960s and continued under the authority of the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment via the Parks and Wildlife Service.

Patchy official records exist and date back to 1936, the year the last captive thylacine died. "Over the years a number of scats (droppings) that people have regarded as possibly from a thylacine have been given to the DPIWE for identification," Mr Aird said. "These are stored and analysed. Hair analysis has been used as animals invariably swallow some of their own hair during grooming. All scats analysed contained hair of dog, cat, quoll or Tasmanian devil. None of them contained hair of thylacine." Any scats that did not contain such hair would be stored for more sophisticated analysis in future.

Mr Aird said the State Government no longer had a detailed contingency plan. "The response to a rediscovery would depend on ... the type of evidence, the ability to verify the evidence, land tenure at and adjacent to the site and whether information about the evidence has been made public," he said. "Yes, the Government supports responsible efforts in trying to establish the existence of the thylacine." Windermere MLC Silvia Smith has been pressing the State Government to answer questions, such as what had been done with tiger "samples handed to authorities over the years". The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery plans to conduct its own \$250,000 search for the tiger and hopes to attract corporate funding.

However, only a few weeks later on the 1st July the *Sunday Tasmanian* announced that "We have lost the Tasmanian devil to Warner Brothers - it is time to reclaim the Tasmanian tiger. That's the attitude of many Tasmanians who want to see a major and permanent Tasmanian tiger exhibition in the state. A World Thylacine Centre would be a focus for the world's insatiable appetite for the presumed-extinct creature which has assumed mythical status. It would house all things thylacine and tell the tragic tale of its extinction." A thylacine exhibition prepared by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is currently touring Australia to rave reviews. It is the first Australian exhibition to go to every major museum in the country. "The interest in the thylacine is huge," Dr Pemberton said. "We're trying to reclaim the tiger for Tassie. Look what happened to the devil, Warner Brothers got that."

Only a couple of weeks before on the 24th June the same newspaper had announced that "The Tasmanian tiger exists in large numbers in north-eastern Tasmania, says British scientist Bob Eeles." Dr Eeles said he was in possession of fresh reports from Tasmanians living near the Panama Forest, north-east of Launceston. "We have numerous records which are not known to anyone else, which are written by extremely credible people, retired academics amongst them, that indicate a pretty healthy population in the North and North-East," Dr Eeles said. Tasmanian tiger expert Col Bailey said he had a theory that recent interest in sightings in the North had been prompted by the prospect of new logging projects going ahead in the area. Mr Bailey, a long-time believer in the existence of the Tasmanian tiger, said there were those who wanted to raise the spectre of thylacines living in the area to stop the logging. Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery vertebrate curator Dr David Pemberton said he could understand Mr Bailey's theory because major

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logging projects would be detrimental to habitat if the thylacine existed.

"It's a possibility that people could use it like a conservation tool and whilst I might sympathise with their efforts I certainly wouldn't promote doing that," Dr Pemberton said. Dr Pemberton, who is co-ordinating a DNA search for thylacine scats, said he doubted the animal existed. "The areas that were most likely have been logged and their environment has changed and the habitat has been disturbed and destroyed," he said. "That's my personal belief but there is always the chance I'm wrong because we have learnt the hard way that extinct animals reappear. "There is bush in Tassie, there are hidden valleys and the lessons tell you you can't always be that sure."

Tasmanian tiger expert and author Eric Guiler said he doubted the animal existed. Dr Guiler said he spent years searching the Tasmanian bush and following up reported sightings. "Never in my life have I even seen a scat," he said. Victorian-based thylacine researcher Bob Paddle wrote his latest book about the last Tasmanian tiger. But while Dr Paddle believes the thylacine is extinct, he said he would be "more than delighted to be wrong". Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment nature conservation branch senior zoologist Sally Bryant said there was no debate about the official status of the thylacine. "Presumed extinct," Dr Bryant said.

Three days later the literal shit really hit the metaphorical fan. Almost literally. Associated Press reported on the 27th June that an unseemly international scientific dispute and turf war has broken out over plans to finally prove whether the thylacine, or Tasmanian tiger, is extinct. Under the headline "**Fear and Loathing on the Thylacine Trail**" which is particularly groovy as it means that we ain't the only writers on the subject of mystery animals who have a penchant for the writings of Hunter S Thompson. The crux of the row is whether animal droppings, that just might include thylacine's, should be allowed out of Tasmania. Dr Eeles was claiming that his project was being frustrated by local scientists and state government authorities who want to keep foreigners out. On the other side, however, are Tasmanians who are determined to stop the plunder of what is left of their most famous animal. There appears to have been a closing of ranks against Bob Eeles, director of the British Biodiversity Trust, who

wants to gather carnivore scats and take them back to England to determine through DNA testing whether any are thylacine. Dr Eeles said the trust, set up by wealthy academics and businessmen, was involved in a number of international ecological projects. He planned to take some scats held by Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum, which he believes may include thylacines, and also collect scats from areas he suspects the animal may still inhabit. They would be subjected to DNA analysis by an Oxford University geneticist. Dr Eeles said the museum was initially co-operative and he was advised by Environment Australia that no export permits were required for scats under federal law.

But the museum changed its mind and there were state laws requiring permits for scats to be collected and removed. Tiger experts threw up the barricades against him. Dr Eeles said he had been messaged about by people who persisted in the belief that the world was against Tasmania and regarded his project as a threat. Sally Bryant, the Environment Department zoologist responsible for permits, said that while Dr Eeles had fired off many e-mails, he had never submitted a project or applied for a permit. Dr Bryant said that she knew nothing about him or the trust and she would have to be satisfied that the scats were going to a reputable scientific institution. Tasmania was also wary of giving up any native wildlife material. "But there is no vendetta," she said. A side issue is Dr Eeles's implication that his idea has been pinched.

In May - months after Dr Eeles widely aired his idea in Tasmania - David Pemberton, curator of vertebrates at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, announced a similar DNA scat project. "Nobody came up with the idea until we did," Dr Eeles said. Dr Pemberton rejected the suggestion that he had stolen the project, saying his involved all carnivores and not just the thylacine. "Looking at molecular material in scats is a standard technique, in no way did he influence me," he said. Dr Pemberton said most thylacine material had already left Tasmania and there was great reluctance to let any more go. Nor, despite inquiries, did he know anything about the trust. Dr Eeles said questioning his credibility was beneath contempt and he had had formal communications with the authorities. However, one source who has had dealings with him said his e-mails were full of "innuendo and paranoia". Lost in all the feuding is the only real question: Is there any chance that the romantic and tragic animal still exists?

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An appreciation of Bernard Heuvelmans (1916 - 2001)

by Loren Coleman



Switzerland's Museum of Zoology of Lausanne informed cryptozoologists worldwide on the morning of 24 August 2001, of the death of Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans, 84, the Father of Cryptozoology. Around noon on August 22nd, without suffering, Heuvelmans, passed away, in his bed at his Le Vésinet, France home, with his faithful dog nearby. Heuvelmans, who had become a Buddhist during his lifetime, was buried in Buddhist monk attire during a private funeral at Le Vésinet on August 27. His former wife, colleague, artist collaborator Alika (Monique Watteau) Lindbergh, who cared for him in his declining years, was in charge of the ceremony, following his last wishes.

Heuvelmans' death is sad news. His towering presence in the field leaves a long shadow. His influence is great. Heuvelmans' contributions to cryptozoology, zoology, and anthropology are significant and far-reaching, and his impact on generations to come will cross decades.

Bernard Heuvelmans was born in Le Havre on October 10, 1916, of a Dutch mother and a Belgian father in exile, and was raised as a "native of Belgium." Heuvelmans found he had a love of natural history from an early age, keeping all kinds of animals, especially monkeys. At school, he shocked his Jesuit teachers by his unholly interest in evolution and jazz. His interest in unknown animals was first piqued as a youngster by his reading of science-fiction adventures such as Jules Verne's Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*. He never forgot these initial passions.

Heuvelmans obtained his higher education at the University Libre of Brussels. While at the university, he won the first prize for small bands at an International Congress of Amateur Jazz. At the age of 23 years, before World War II, he obtained a doctor's title in zoological sciences. His thesis was dedicated to the classification of the hitherto unclassifiable teeth of the aardvark (*Orycteropus afer*), a unique African mammal.

Heuvelmans then spent the next years writing about the history of science, publishing numerous scientific works notably in the Bulletin of the Royal Museum of Natural History of Belgium. His interests continued to extend beyond the zoological realm. Captured by the Germans after he was called up for military service from Belgium, he escaped four times before eking out a living as a professional jazz singer and then as a science writer. He saw himself as a humanist in the broadest sense, and he published two works late in the war: *The Man Among Stars* (1944) and *The Man in the Hollow of the Atom* (1943). The Germans, during the war, arrested him because his writings offended them, and then the Belgians arrested him afterwards, because he had written them at all.

Settling in Paris and more particularly in Le Vésinet from 1947, Heuvelmans became a comedian, a jazz musician (From Bamboula to Be-bop, 1949), a writer (*The Secret of Fates* in three volumes, *The Continuation of the Life*, *The Abolition of the Death*, *The Renovation*, 1951-1952).

When Heuvelmans read a January 3, 1948 Saturday Evening Post article ("There Could be Dinosaurs"), in

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which biologist Ivan T. Sanderson sympathetically discussed the evidence for relict dinosaurs, Heuvelmans decided to pursue his vague, unfocussed interest in hidden animals in a systematic way. At the time, he was translating numerous scientific works among which was *The Secret World of the Animals* by Dr. Maurice Burton, republished afterward in seven volumes under the title *Encyclopedia of the Animal Kingdom*. Heuvelmans began to gather material about yet-to-be-discovered animals in his what he would later refer as his growing "dossiers" on them.

From 1948 on, Heuvelmans exhaustively sought evidence in scientific and literary sources. Within five years he had amassed so much material that he was ready to write a large book. That book turned out to be *Sur la piste des betes ignorees*, published in 1955, and better known in its English translation three years later as *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. Almost five decades later, the book remains in print, with an excess of one million copies sold in various translations and editions, including one in 1995, with a large updated introduction.

The book's impact was enormous. As one critic remarked at the time, "Because his research is based on rigorous dedication to scientific method and scholarship and his solid background in zoology, Heuvelmans's findings are respected throughout the scientific community." Soon Heuvelmans was engaged in massive correspondence as his library and other researches continued. In the course of letter-writing, he invented the word "cryptozoology" (it does not appear in *On the Track*). That word saw print for the first time in 1959 when French wildlife official Lucien Blancou dedicated a book to the "master of cryptozoology." Heuvelmans corresponded with many cryptozoologists worldwide, as he did with me, sometimes for decades. By the 1960s, most in the field had elevated Blancou's phrase in honor of Heuvelmans, and Heuvelmans was being called the "Father of Cryptozoology."

Writing in *Cryptozoology* in 1984, Heuvelmans said, "I tried to write about it according to the rules of scientific documentation." Because of the unorthodox nature of his interests, however, he had no institutional sponsorship and had to support himself with his writing. "That is why," he wrote, "I have always had to make my books fascinating for the largest possible audience."

Heuvelmans and his book influenced the investigative work of cryptozoology supporter Tom Slick. Sanderson, who influenced Heuvelmans, in turn was influenced by Heuvelmans. Heuvelmans served as a confidential consultant, along with such intellectual early contributors like anthropologist George Agogino and zoologist Ivan Sanderson, on Slick's secret board of advisors. Heuvelmans was asked to examine the "Yeti skullcap" brought back by Sir Edumund Hillary's World Book expedition of 1960. He was also one of then first to declare it was a ritual object made from the skin of a serow, a small goatlike animal found in the Himalayas, even before Hillary's debunking of the yeti took place. Heuvelmans' extensive files on the Slick expeditions remained mostly unpublished until he contributed some for inclusion in the 1989 book, *Tom Slick and the Search for the Yeti*.

On the Track of Unknown Animals was concerned exclusively with land animals. The second of Heuvelmans' landmark works to be translated into English, *In the Wake of the Sea-Serpents* (1968), covered the ocean's unknowns, including the recognized but still in some ways enigmatic giant squid.

In 1968, Heuvelmans (at Sanderson's invitation) examined what was represented to be the frozen cadaver of a hairy hominoid, the subject of *his L'homme de Neanderthal est toujours vivant* (with Boris Porshnev, 1974). Other books, none yet translated into English, include works on surviving dinosaurs and relict hominids in Africa.

Heuvelmans's Center for Cryptozoology, established in 1975, was first housed near Le Bugue in the south of France, but in the 1990s, moved to LeVesinet, closer to Paris. It consisted of his huge private library and his massive files, his original treasured dossiers. Heuvelmans was elected president when the International Society of Cryptozoology was founded in Washington, D.C., in 1982. He held that position until his death. He also was involved with the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club and other efforts for active cryptid studies globally. The decades saw more and more honors amassed, as for example, when in 1990, he was named a honorary member of the Cryptozoology Association of Russia. In a 1984 interview Heuvelmans expressed the desire to write a 20-volume cryptozoology encyclopedia, but owing to the death of a translator and other problems with his publisher, no volume appeared before his Heuvelmans' death,

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Down through the years, without fanfare, Heuvelmans journeyed from the shores of Loch Ness to the jungles of Malaysia, from Africa to Indonesia, interviewing witnesses and examining the evidence for cryptids. He produced a few articles along the way, and infrequently gave news interviews. But beginning in the 1990s, he would avoid media events.

For example, when a television network asked in 1994 and 1995, to tape an interview with Heuvelmans about the Minnesota Iceman, he refused to come to America to do it, and then denied a filming in France. Although he had had a French television program on natural history mysteries some two decades earlier, he routinely would not grant most mainstream interviews in the last decade of his life.

He also hardly ever trekked to formal meetings.

For many of us in North America, visiting with him, for example, at an early 1980s gathering in New York City, will now always be a delightful and rare memory.

When in February 1997, he was awarded the Gabriele Peters Prize for Fantastic Science at the Zoological Museum of the University of Hamburg, Germany, he was unable to appear to collect the prize of 10,000 Marks (about \$6000) and sent his friend, journalist, and cryptozoologist Werner Reichenbach, to accept on his behalf.

Heuvelmans's health began to more rapidly fail in the mid-1990s; still he continued to work on completing his grand plan for his multi-volume encyclopedia.

In 1999, he donated his vast holdings and archives in cryptozoology to The Museum of Zoology of Lausanne in Switzerland (<http://www.lausanne.ch/musees/zool/cryptozoologie>), following through on a commitment he had made in 1987. By 2001, many of us were dismayed to find he was mostly bedridden, refusing visits, and in very poor health.

In his waning years, his mind was filled with worries that no one would credit him for what he had done. He need not have troubled himself. Heuvelmans said he merely wanted to be remembered as "The Father of Cryptozoology." He will be recalled thusly for his efforts on behalf of the new science, as well as much

more, for his personality and scholarship. Bernard Heuvelmans, dead at 84, will hardly be forgotten. Nevertheless, Heuvelmans' friendship, fresh insights, and frisky humor will be missed. Goodbye, my friend.

A list of Heuvelmans's books follows:

- * 1955 *Sur la piste des bêtes ignorées*. Paris: Plon.
- 1958 *Dans le sillage des monstres marins - Le Kraken et le Poulpe Colossal*. Paris: Plon.
- * 1958 *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. London: Hart-Davis.
- * 1959 *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. New York: Hill and Wang
- * 1965 *Le Grand-Serpent-de-Mer, le problème zoologique et sa solution*. Paris: Plon.
- * 1965 *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. (Abridged, revised.) New York: Hill and Wang.
- * 1968 *In the Wake of Sea Serpents*. New York: Hill and Wang.
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- * 1978 *Les derniers dragons d'Afrique*. Paris: Plon.
- * 1980 *Les bêtes humaines d'Afrique*. Paris: Plon.
- * 1995 *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. London: Kegan Paul International.
- * Heuvelmans, Bernard, and Boris F. Porchnev
1974 *L'homme de Néanderthal est toujours vivant*. Paris, Plon.

Loren Coleman

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BERNARD HEUVELMANS – THE ULTIMATE RESEARCHER INTO UNKNOWN ANIMALS

by

François de SARRE, zoologist

I was very affected by the death of Bernard Heuvelmans. When I first heard of his work on *unknown animals*, I was still wearing a pair of knee-breeches. I was not yet 10 years old.. I can remember this part of my life very well. In the library, the two volumes of "*Sur la piste des Bêtes ignorées*" stood on a shelf. Ready to be grasped. I didn't hesitate twice!

Now, more than 40 years later, I recapitulate with emotion what happened since this famous day. Bernard Heuvelmans has left, but he has always going along with me, indeed! The reading of his first book made me discover my vocation as a zoologist. It was the most exciting thing I had ever read. My parents would have got their mind in patience, as I began to collect animals, as lizards and newts, and so on... My boy's room became a kind of a little zoo. I was always reading books on natural history. My great interest centered particularly on fish. I began to reproduce some rare species in aquarium (cichlids from East Africa). After my bachelor's degree, I went to the university of Saarbrücken (Germany) in order to study Zoology.

Some years later, as I stayed on a Tunisian island, with other colleagues, collecting animals for the collections of the zoological institute in Saarbrücken. It was there that I had my second encounter with Bernard Heuvelmans' Cryptozoology...

I was dealing with fishes, but nevertheless I was helping my friends who were looking for snakes or other reptiles. We knew that on this island, called "Jalta", between the African coast and Sardinia, there were some snakes, called *Macropotodon*. They were

numerous, and we caught a lot of them. But the inhabitants of the island talked us about another kind of snake. My friend, a specialist of reptiles, said it was quite impossible! We had looked at every (water) point where snakes were intended to live, i.e. where they got your favorite meal: frogs.

One day, therefore, as I was returned alone to this island, I have found the "cryptid" snake, far from all ponds, at a rather arid emplacement. It was a splendid *Natrix maura*, said to be attached to water! Then, the inhabitants of the island were right... And my dear colleague was wrong! I have found an unknown and rather unexpected animal on such a Tunisian island, far from the mainland.

At that time, I remembered Heuvelmans' book.

On the other hand, I've heard from the same inhabitants of the island that some "giant" murenae (up to 3-4 metres!) were living on some shallow areas, unfar from the main island. Maybe all this was not fairy tales?

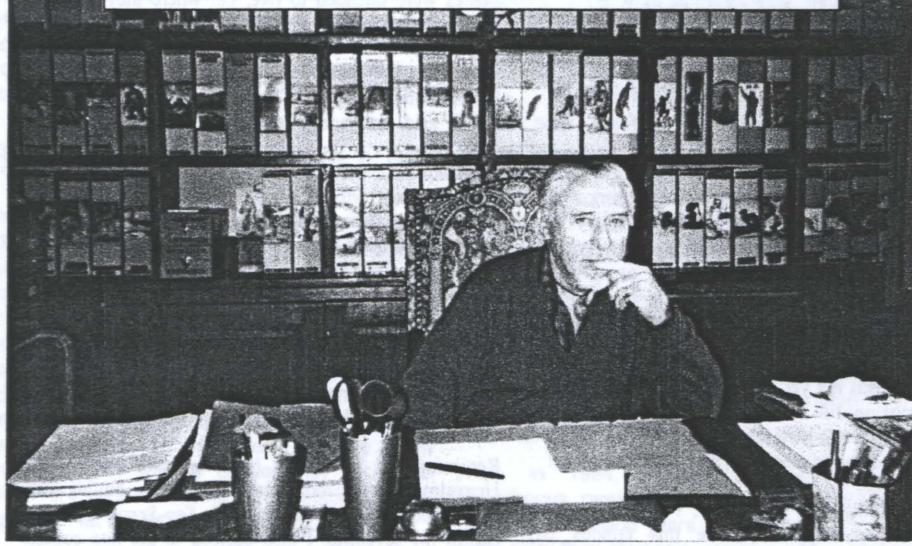
Returning to Europe, I connected back with Heuvelmans' cryptozoological work in buying his famous book "*On the wake of the Sea-Serpent*", at the end of the seventies. I also decided to get into contact with Bernard Heuvelmans, who was then publishing his 2 big volumes: "*Les derniers dragons d'Afrique*" and "*Les Bêtes humaines d'Afrique*".

But we first corresponded more about zoological theories, like the "initial bipedalism" theory [stipulating that the first mammals were bipeds that issued from a former aquatic stage] than over the mystery animals of the world of Cryptozoology. Heuvelmans was the pupil of Serge Frechkop, a Belgian zoologist who had disserted on the natural history of the vertebrates, in a very unconventional way.

As Bernard Heuvelmans came often to his summer holidays on the *Ile du Levant* in south France, I regularly met with him. I stayed each time some days on this pretty Mediterranean island. These were truly among the most beautiful days in my life. We discussed about all scientific topics. And I especially heard several times from his own mouth the extraordinary report about the Minnesota Iceman. How Heuvelmans together with Ivan Sanderson, had actually seen this incredible *pongoid*. As a matter of fact, it remains the best proof that relic neanderthals are still living nowadays!

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This was the last picture I ever took of my friend Bernard



Bernard Heuvelmans also told me of his first books, that were more philosophical, dealing with the eternal youth, with man's origins and destiny... These books were called:

- “*L'Homme parmi les étoiles*” (1944),
- * “*L'Homme au creux de l'atome*” (1946),
- “*Le Secret des Parques*” (3 volumes, 1951-1952).

Now, Bernard Heuvelmans is dead, and these early works became his spiritual testament.

I saw them, with many other books he have ever published and the others he had bought, in the splendid individual library of Bernard, in the “*Centre de Cryptozoologie*” in Le Vésinet (near Paris).

There was Heuvelmans' main work “*Sur la piste des Bêtes ignorées*” (1955), near the English translation “*On the Track of Unknown Animals*” (1958, 1995) and many other translations in several languages.

papers, articles and the archives (20,000 documents of all the world!) from the “*Centre de Cryptozoologie*” are now to be seen (by prior appointment) in the “*Musée cantonal de Zoologie*”, Palais de la Rumine, Place de la Riponne 6, CH-1005 Lausanne (Switzerland).

A whole department is dedicated to the Father of Cryptozoology.

Now, we shall work together to continue Bernard Heuvelman's work. The Cryptozoological Enquiry must go on.

Thank you, Bernard, from all heart, for what you have done for Zoology and for our knowledge of still hidden animals that are expecting to be undiscovered by science!

We'll miss you.

François de SARRE

C.E.R.B.I. – 32 avenue de Buenos-Ayres,
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BERNARD HEUVELMANS: LAST OF THE SCIENTIFIC ROMANTICS

Richard Freeman

Few scientists can have the distinction of creating a new discipline. Fewer still can claim it as the most exciting discipline in their field. Bernard Heuvelmans was one such scientist.

When I began my professional interest in cryptozoology his books were exceedingly rare and out of print. After years of book searches I finally found them. *On the Track of Unknown Animals* and *In the Wake of the Sea Serpents* were and remain the greatest works ever written in the field. Yet they are so much more than scholarly zoological tomes. Heuvelmans was truly the last of the great scientific romantics, a tradition that reaches as far back as Herodotus and Aristotle and has included such names as Marco Polo, Aldrovandus, Topsall, Darwin, Wallace, and Gould. Pick up any work of science today (especially natural history) and you will find minds imprisoned in dogma, too timid to speculate beyond whatever they can dissect on a laboratory table. Science should not work in this way and it used not to.

Heuvelmans's works illustrate this amply. Fascinating latter day bestiaries filled with creatures that inhabit the twilight fringes of zoology. It is a crime that the bulk of his life's work lies untranslated.

Heuvelmans has had his detractors of late, critics who buzz about him like insects. I will not sully his memory by naming names here, but 50 or 100 years down the line Heuvelmans and his work will be remembered whilst his detractors will have been tossed away like leaves on the wind. Moreover he was recently vindicated by the discovery of the pigmy elephant in the Congo. It is a shame though, that one

of the cryptozoological icons about whom he speculated, was not found during his lifetime. I hope that when a type specimen of such a beast falls into our hand we will remember this great man and the latter half of the beast's scientific name will be *heuvalmani*

Au revoir Bernard.

OBITUARY: JOAN AMOS 1921 - 2001

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you all that Joan Amos, veteran British UFOlogist and a great friend to many of us has died. She was 79.

Although she had been involved in UFOlogy for many years she became interested in the subject relatively late in life after a sighting that occurred whilst she was hospitalised during a bout of ill health in her home town of Tavistock on the western edges of Dartmoor. Over the following years she threw herself into the subject and her picturesque cottage in one of the small villages on the outskirts of the town soon became a Mecca for visiting UFOlogists from around the world.

I met her first about a decade ago and have fond memories of many happy hours spent sitting in the sitting room of her tiny cottage surrounded by teetering copies of Flying Saucer Review and friendly though highly territorial pussy cats. We appeared together on television many times during the mid '90s, most notably on a TSW Show called "Mysterious Westcountry".

She was a pillar of strength to me during my divorce and her homespun wisdom and cheery good humour got me through some very difficult times.

Now she is dead I can finally clear up a mystery that I have been unable to talk about for the past five or so years. In 1996 whilst I was researching the book that eventually became *The Owlman and Others*. I became involved with the investigations into the animal mutilations at Newquay Zoo in 1978. In the book I describe the unnerving events surrounding my acquisition of the original case documents (including the original police report). I can now reveal that I obtained

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the documents from Joan, and that I promised her not to reveal the fact during her lifetime. She was always convinced that there was far more to the case than met the eye and even the last time I spoke to her a few months ago she was still urging me to investigate further.

She spent many years investigating animal mutilations and animal abduction/translocation cases across the South West of England, and the results of many years of her research were published by us in the 1997 CFZ Yearbook.

Soon afterwards she was badly injured in an accident and was to a greater or lesser extent immobile for many of the last few years of her life. However she always bore her disability bravely, and it was a great shock when Margaret Fry telephoned me to tell me she had died.

She was a good friend and will be sorely and sincerely missed. JON DOWNES

OBITUARY: TOVE JANSSON 1914-2001

It is something like June 1967, and like most people my age, the summer of love is passing me by completely - I was, in common with Sid Vicious, too busy playing with my Action Men. On this occasion, though, I am sitting in a primary school classroom in South Croydon, being read a story by Mrs Bejafeld.. This happens on pretty much a daily basis, and while I can't say I remember any other stories read to me at the time (in later years we got The Hobbit and Elidor .though) this one has stayed with me ever since - The Finn Family Moomintroll by Tove Jansson. This book, and her other Moomin books are on the shelves behind me as I write, waiting to be read to (and hopefully by) my soon-to-be-born daughter as soon as she is old enough. One of the things that triggered my relationship with my first wife was a shared love of Moomintroll - we later visited the marvellous Tove Jansson Museum in the basement of the beautiful library in Tampere, Finland together - and all my cats have been named after Moomintroll characters - the

current one, Little My, reflects the character of her fictional namesake scarily well.

Tove Jansson died on 27 June, aged 86 after a long illness, and although she wrote her last Moomintroll book in 1970, she will be keenly missed by many Forteans who were, like me, drawn deeply into Moomintroll's magic world. She began her first Moomintroll story to keep her spirits up during her native Finland's bitter winter war against the Soviet Union in 1939-40. Published in 1945 it introduced the world to Moomintroll, a rotund, hippo-faced creature, his family and friends and their very Finnish homeland of snows, short, hot summers and pine forests. Between then and 1970, she produced a total of 8 books featuring the Moomins and their world, so very unlike any other children's books, it is hard to exactly describe their uniqueness.

While essentially happy and immensely inventive, Jansson did not shy away from giving her characters complex emotions, and to bring, fear, despair, loneliness and terror into the picture on occasions. This rich emotional tapestry and the imaginative storytelling, coupled with marvellous illustrations (Jansson was a superb draftsman and also illustrated Alice in Wonderland and Lord of the Rings) did much to capture children's imaginations, and make those children carry the books with them into adulthood as well. A mark of the complexity of her characters is that they grow and mature throughout the books, and one of the reasons the books stopped in 1970 was that Moomintroll would have been an adolescent if she'd taken them further, and she did not feel that would work.

The final book "Moominland Midwinter" does not feature him and his family, focussing instead on Moominvalley's other inhabitants, which include such glorious inventions as the Hemulen, Snufkin, the intensely alien Hattifattiners and the sinister Groke, who is permanently surrounded by a patch of arctic cold whatever the season, and snow still scares the CFZ crew silly to this day.

Tove Jansson's luminous creativity has done much to open the minds of children (and adults) to the possibilities of the imagination. Though her voice, long silent, is now permanently stilled, the books are still very much with us as a legacy for future generations to treasure with the joy that accompanies the discovery of something truly special. Thank you Tove. - IAN SIMMONS

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OBITUARY: E.T.HALL 1923-2001

E.T. Hall, the Oxford University professor who exposed the hoax of Piltdown Man and joined an international effort to date the Shroud of Turin, has died aged 77. Hall, who directed the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford for 34 years after its foundation in 1955, died on Aug. 11.

Piltdown man, apparently discovered in a gravel pit in southern England in 1912, was once thought to be a "missing link" in evolution. Its skull had human features, but the jaw appeared to be more related to apes. Later archaeological discoveries raised suspicions about Piltdown man, and Hall provided the damning evidence. In 1953, he used X-ray fluorescence techniques to prove that the bones had been stained with potassium dichromate to make them look fossilized. Hall also discovered iron filings that indicated the teeth of an orangutan's jawbone had been filed to make them appear more human. In a letter to the scientific journal Nature in 1994, Hall disclosed that the British Museum's custody of the Piltdown head nearly frustrated his tests, but the quick, nondestructive nature of his new X-ray fluorescence analysis helped get around it. "Indeed, these analyses were probably the very first practical use of XRF for either academic or commercial purposes," he said.

Hall is survived by his wife and two sons.

OBITUARY: SIR FRED HOYLE 1915-2001

For the 25 years after the second world war the contributions made to the sciences of astrophysics and cosmology by Fred Hoyle surpassed those of any other scientist in the world. Probably the most important of his early theories was that of the "steady state" universe, first proposed in 1948. From the beginning

he argued the theory with a lot of energy and at all levels. At a time when scientists tended to be preceded by multiple academic titles and sheltered in academic institutions he was simply "Fred Hoyle" to most people. As a populariser of science he was one of the first, starting with his third programme series, *The Nature of the Universe*. This programme surprised all at the BBC by winning greater audiences than such popular figures as Tommy Handley and Wilfred Pickles. In fact the steady state universe theory fell into disfavour in the 1960s as the Big Bang theory began to be proved. Interestingly, in a slightly perverse way his work actually helped to clarify the theory of the big bang. His inventiveness and ingenuity were not just restricted to astrophysics and a series of novels were produced starting in 1957 with the *Black Cloud*, possibly the best selling being *October The First Is Too Late*, a time travel story with a difference. Although he was educated at Emmanuel College Cambridge where he read maths, his Yorkshire upbringing was said to have always remained detectable, and perhaps was responsible for his lack of interest in committee work and administration. Despite this he did serve on the Council of the Royal Society and the Science Research Council. However a dispute over funding at Cambridge led to his premature retirement in 1972, the same year in which he was knighted. Retirement did not however stifle his productive mind, and although based in the lake district, for the hill-walking, he held visiting positions at various universities. If anything retirement broadened his diversity and he became embroiled 'in argument in subjects ranging from Archaeology (was Stonehenge a prehistoric observatory?), to Epidemiology.

Possibly his most interesting ideas were those relating to evolution and the idea of Panspermia which he worked on with Chandra Wickramasinghe and first suggested in 1978. The basic concept of panspermia is that life did not evolve on earth but deep in space and was transported here by comets and meteors. The idea developed further into the concept that some viral epidemics, and in particular the winter outbreaks of influenza where spread by falling through the atmosphere, and so where a function of where people lived and worked, rather than whom they had been in contact with. Although biologists ridiculed the idea of "life seeding from space" for many years they gradually became less unacceptable with the increasing number of biochemicals found to be present in deep space by radio-astronomy and the finding of amino acids in meteor craters. On learning of these discoveries the astronomer Carl Sagan had commented: "The impact giveth and the impact taketh away!" CHRIS MOISER

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CONGRATULATIONS

AFTER SUCH A LONG AND SAD OBITUARY SECTION IT IS NICE TO BE ABLE TO OFFER HEARTY CFZ CONGRATULATIONS TO.....

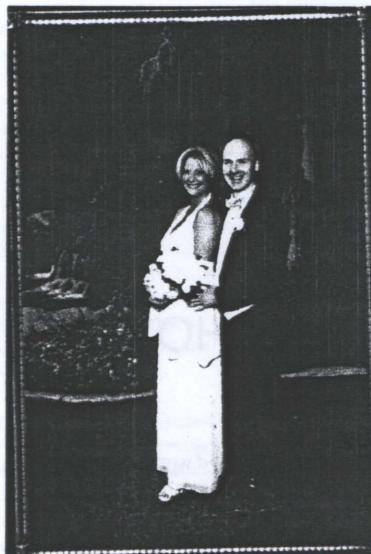
Darren and Tony Naish on the birth of their first child. Will Darren who was born on the 20th September



Also joining the ever-growing fortean family is Claudia Simmons, daughter of Ian and Rachel. She was born on the 15th August....



This issue we have births to report and we have deaths to report. It seems only fitting that we also have a marriage. Our good friend Nick Redfern, once of Pelsall in the West Midlands and now of somewhere odd in the middle of Texas married his fiancee Dana just as we were going to press. We wish them all the very best for a long and happy life together. Births, Marriages and deaths. Truly the CFZ is at the hub of a true community. Long may we remain so.



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EARLIEST HUMAN ANCESTOR? NOT LIKELY!

By Dr Lloyd Pye

A STAR IS BORN

Media everywhere have recently carried banner stories about the discovery in Ethiopia of fossil bones deemed the oldest yet found of the primate species that eventually evolved into humans. Worldwide news outlets for TV, print, radio, and wire have trumpeted the inexorable march of science back to the moment when the so-called "common ancestor" of apes and humans will eventually be unearthed. Such reports are given as if no other result is remotely possible; it is simply a matter of time and circumstance. But is it?

The new fossils average 5.5 million years old, neatly fitting within the range of 5 to 7 million years ago that is the accepted window for when humans and apes diverged from the common ancestor. However, that window is heavily fogged with assumptions rather than provable calculations. Geneticists have made broad assumptions about mutation rates in the mitochondrial DNA of great apes, which just happens to dovetail in the window with equally broad assumptions made by physical anthropologists.

The anthropological estimate begins with an astonishing string of human-shaped footprints tracked across volcanic ash 3.5 million years ago in what today is Laetoli, Tanzania. Upright bipedal walking is considered a hallmark of humanity and all of its predecessors, so if it was firmly established at 3.5 million years ago, the process

had to begin at least 2 or 3 million years earlier. Add 2 to 3 million years to 3.5 million and you arrive at 5.5 to 6.5 million years ago. Tack on another half million front and back for coverage and presto! Primates started becoming bipedal 5 to 7 million years ago.

THE DOGMA SHUFFLE

Despite howls of protest to the contrary, that is usually how scientists operate. They will arrive at a poorly supported conclusion because it seems logical based on what they know at a certain point in time. Rather than make that conclusion provisional, which should be automatic because science is nothing more than a long series of corrected mistakes, their assumption becomes dogma that is strenuously defended until a new conclusion is shoved down the unwilling throats of the specialists responsible for perpetuating the dogma.

A clear example occurred decades ago when scientists arrived at the seemingly obvious conclusion that humanity was propelled to its destiny by a radical change in climate. The forest homes of the early great apes—and the supposed common ancestor of humanity—must have suffered a severe blight, forcing some primates to begin making their way out onto the savannas that replaced the forests. In the process, increased hand dexterity would become essential. Tools and weapons would have to be held or carried, as well as food and possibly infants, although this last notion was and remains a point of contention.

Though lacking truly opposable thumbs, nonhuman primate infants have enough strength and dexterity in their hands and feet to cling to their mothers' body hair from the first few moments after birth. Human babies must be carried almost constantly for a full year and, to be safe, for ample parts of another. Nobody can agree on when—much less why—such a severely negative physiological trait would start to manifest, but one assumption is that it started when body hair began to diminish and/or feet began losing the ability to grasp.

Another unsolved strategic puzzle is why prehumans would relinquish so much physical strength (pound for pound all primates—even

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monkeys—are 5 to 10 times stronger than humans) during the transition onto the savanna. That makes even less sense than giving up the clinging ability of infants. However, as infants' hands and feet lost traction, adult hands became ever more dexterous and their feet became ever more adapted to upright locomotion, which—though inexplicable—must have been a worthwhile trade-off.

THE AGONY OF THE FEET

Whatever the reasons, as prehuman hands were utilized for other tasks, they could no longer be used for locomotion, which necessitated moving more and more on the rear limbs alone. In short, so the theorizing went, the more we used our hands, the more we were forced to stand upright. Furthermore, as we assumed both of those radical changes in primate lifestyle, our brains grew larger to accommodate all of the unique new tasks required to succeed in the new environment. It was a conveniently reciprocal spiral of ever-increasing sophistication and capability that led (or drove) us to our destiny.

That dogma stayed in place until 1974, when the famous fossil hominid "Lucy" was discovered in a dry desert arroyo in Ethiopia. Dated reliably at 3.2 million years ago, Lucy clearly walked upright as a fully functioning biped. There was no doubt about it. Problem was, she had the head and brain of a chimpanzee. In fact, she was little more than an upright walking chimpanzee, and a small one at that (3.5 feet tall). Overnight, science lost its ability to insist that brainpower had to increase, ipso facto, with the coequal modifications of hand freedom and bipedality.

Lucy created other problems, too. Her arms seemed a bit longer than they should have been in an incipient human, although lingering echoes of chimpanzeehood were acceptable. A further echo was her hands, which had thumbs that were not very opposable, and fingers that were longer and curved a bit more than seemed appropriate.

Vaguely ape-like hands atop markedly human-like feet did not set well with the established dogma. Then there was the problem of where she was

found, in an area that when she died was primarily wooded forest. That confounded the dogmatists because forests rarely created fossils, while prehumans were supposed to be found on savannas, which did produce fossils.

BIGWORDS-R-US

Lucy and several others of her kind (*Australopithecus afarensis*) forced anthropologists to accept that primate brain modification had to be caused by something other than hand and foot modification. However, it still made sense to assume that any primate moving from forest to savanna had to use its hands to hold and carry, and its feet to walk exclusively upright. Five years after Lucy, the Laetoli tracks cemented that assumption, showing perfect bipedality on a flat, open area—possibly a savanna—at 3.5 million years ago. Anthropologists heaved a sigh of relief and considered Lucy's woodland home a fluke.

Then, in 1994, a new fossil group called *Ardipithecus ramidus* was found in Ethiopia and dated at 4.4 million years ago. Though 1.2 million years older than *afarensis*, *ramidus* was every bit as bipedal, giving no sign of transition between them. This trashed the idea that bipedality was an evolutionary lynchpin for humanity. Worse, *ramidus* died—and apparently lived—in an area every bit as forested as *afarensis*. Yikes!

[Like most of you reading this, I, too, deplore anthropology's overblown nomenclature. Would that they could be as succinct as astronomers. The beginning of everything? The Big Bang. A big red star? A Red Giant. A small white star? A White Dwarf. And so on.... Unfortunately, anthropologists earn their way making mountains of suppositions out of molehills of data, the sparsity of which they obfuscate with pedagogic pedantry.]

In 1995, with anthropologists still reeling from the "ramidus problem," two separate groups of fossils were found in Kenya. At about 4.0 million years old, *Australopithecus anamensis* was only 400,000 years younger than *ramidus*, but they were different enough to warrant inclusion in a separate genus, the one that held Lucy and her ilk. Like *afarensis* and *ramidus*, *anamensis* was a fully erect biped, which

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was another stake in the heart of bipedality as a construct of prehuman evolution. That was bad enough. But despite its location distantly south of northern Ethiopia, *anamensis* also lived and died in a forest.

Now comes the much ballyhooed discovery of *Ardipithecus kadabba*, 5.5 million years old and 1.1 million years older than *ramidus*. And guess what? Kadabba was also found in what was once heavy forest! That leaves anthropologists everywhere hearing the first chilling notes of the Fat Lady warming up. Why? Because prehumans could not possibly have evolved or developed, or whatever they did, in forests. If that were true there would be absolutely no reason for them to abandon established great ape behavior. Great apes have forest living wired to an extreme, and they have had it wired for over 20 million years, back to when their ancestors first appeared in the Miocene epoch.

THE SKELETON IN THE CLOSET

Just as the public did with *ramidus*, they will overlook or disregard the new anomalous forested environment, and eventually anthropologists will be back to business as usual. Everyone—scientists and public alike—will resume accepting the idea that some small group of quadrupedal primates left the forests to live on the savannas of their time and thereby became human. It could not possibly have happened any other way. Humanity could not have evolved or developed in a forest because we are physically unsuited to it. So what could make our earliest ancestors do so? What could make them stand upright?

Nothing. That's not a choice any sane creature would make. Forest dwelling primates—even those like gorillas, which dwell primarily on the forest floor—would not forego the ability to scamper up trees, or easily move from tree to tree, without an overwhelmingly compelling reason, and no such reason could ever exist in the forest itself. Only a radical, extended change in environment could warrant the equally radical and extensive physical transformation from

quadruped to biped. And if no evidence for such an environmental change is discernable over two million years of extremely early bipedality, right back to the alleged point of divergence between great apes and prehumans, then anthropology is facing a quintessential dilemma: How to explain such an inexplicable discrepancy?

Surprisingly, there is an easy and simple solution. Unfortunately, it is not in the ballpark of a wide range of currently accepted dogmas within and outside of anthropology, and in this sensitive area of knowledge anthropologists are the gatekeepers, tasked with making certain the rest of us aren't exposed to it. Why? Because, in the immortal words of Jack Nicholson, they don't believe we can handle it. Well, I think all but the most hidebound of us can, so for better or worse, here it is. Read on if you want to know the truth.

ONCE UPON A TIME

It begins back in the Miocene epoch, mentioned earlier, which extended for roughly 20 million years (25 to 5 million years ago). Over the course of those 20 million years, more than 50 species of tailless primate apes were known to roam the planet. Those 50+ types have been classified into 20 genera (groups) with names like *Proconsul*, *Kenyapithecus*, *Dryopithecus*, *Sivapithecus*, and most familiar to a general audience, *Gigantopithecus*. Okay, show of hands....how many reading this have heard of the Miocene and of the dozens of apes that lived during the course of its 20 million years? Not many, eh?

The reason is because it presents a painful embarrassment to anyone who supports the notion of Darwinian evolution, which definitely includes mainstream anthropologists. Now, I am *not* a Creationist, so please don't cop any attitude because of the preceding sentence. It's true and it must be stated. Evolution dictates there should have been one, then two, then three, then four, etc., as the magic of speciation produced more and more tailless primates to live wherever they could adapt themselves to fit. Unfortunately for anthropologists, the exact opposite occurred. Dozens came into existence during the Miocene, most quite suddenly, with no obvious precursors, which is difficult enough to explain. But then nearly all went extinct,

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leaving only six to thrive: two types of gorilla, two types of chimp, gibbons and orangutans. Why? How? Is that a logical scenario?

No, it's not. Miocene apes were ubiquitous, being found throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe. They came in all sizes, from two-foot-tall elves to ten-foot giants. In short, the planet was theirs to do with as they pleased.

Their natural predators would have been few, and the larger ones would have had little to fear from any other creature, even big cats. But since Miocene apes lived almost exclusively in forests, and the big cats lived almost exclusively on savannas, their paths seldom crossed. So for the most part, and as with great apes today, the majority of Miocene apes were masters of all they surveyed.

AGAIN UPON THE SAME TIME

Imagine the situation as it was....dozens of tailless ape species living throughout the planet's forests and in some cases jungles (the dry kind, not swamps), microevolving to whatever degree necessary to make their lives comfortable wherever they were. Given that scenario, what would cause all but six types to go extinct? Well....nothing, really. In the past 20 million years there have been no global catastrophes. The last of those was 65 million years ago, when the dinosaurs were wiped out. So apart from enduring migrations necessitated by the slow waxing and waning of Ice Ages, all Miocene apes would have been free to pursue their individual destinies in relative peace and tranquility.

This brings us to the crux of the anthropological dilemma: How to explain the loss of so many Miocene apes when there is no logical or biologically acceptable reason for it? They should still be with us, living in the forests and jungles that sustained them for 20 million years. Species don't go extinct on a whim, they endure at almost any cost. They are especially hard to eradicate if they are generalists not locked into a specific habitat, which many Miocene apes seem to have

avoided. In fact, several were apparently such efficient generalists, it makes more biological sense for them to have survived into our own time than ecological specialists like gorillas, chimps, gibbons, and orangutans.

As it happens, science does not know a tremendous amount about the bodies of Miocene apes. Most of the categories have been classified solely by skulls, skull parts, and teeth, which are the most durable bones in primate bodies.

For example, the best known of the Miocene apes, *Gigantopithecus*, is classified by only four jawbones and many hundreds of teeth. Nevertheless, that is enough to designate them as the physical giants they were, and so it goes with many others. Among those others, enough fragments of arm and leg bones have been recovered to show their limbs were surprisingly balanced in length.

Quadrupeds have arms that are distinctly longer than their legs to make moving on all fours graceful and easy. Humans have arms that are distinctly shorter than their legs. Some Miocene apes have arms that are equal in length to their legs. Nonetheless, every Miocene ape is considered to have been a quadruped. On the face of it, this would seem to warrant another, perhaps more inclusive or flexible interpretation. Unfortunately, we can't have one because anthropologists insist that the six quadrupeds living among us today are fully representative of all Miocene categories. That makes sense, doesn't it?

TWISTED KNICKERS

I hope by now you can see where this is heading. There is absolutely no way anyone can say for certain that all Miocene apes were quadrupeds. Clearly some of them were, but it is equally possible that some were bipeds as early as 20 million years ago. That is based on established facts and undeniable logic, but it will be strenuously disputed by virtually all anthropologists who might be confronted with it. In fact, if you want to see someone get their knickers in a twist, as the British like to say, suggest to an anthropologist that several of the Miocene apes might well have been bipeds. If

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you accept this challenge, step back, plug your ears, and brace yourself. You are in for a tongue lashing.

The problem for anthropologists is that if they acknowledge the distinct possibility that some of the 50+ species of tailless Miocene apes might indeed have been bipedal, they are opening the door to a possibility so embarrassing that they don't even like to dream about it, much less actively consider it. That possibility—in case you haven't guessed it by now—is hominoids in general and bigfoot/sasquatch in particular. If there are words more able to infuriate diehard, hardcore bone peddlers, I don't know what they are.

Despite the vitriol and invective hurled on hominoids by all but a handful of certified anthropologists, the historical record and biological reality dictate that they stand a much greater chance of existing than of not existing. If we make the assumption that they may have gotten their start in forests 20 million years ago, and prospered in them for all those millennia, it establishes a solid possibility that anthropologists are looking in the wrong direction trying to figure out the lineage of kaddaba, ramidus, Lucy, and every other so-called prehuman through Neanderthals—none of which look anything like true humans.

Instead of looking forward to what such creatures might have developed into, perhaps anthropologists would be better served to look back in time, into the Miocene, to try to determine where they might have come from. Which Miocene ape might have been the ancestor of Kaddaba? Which might have been the ancestor of Ramidus? Which of Lucy? And, most blood-chilling of all, which one might have been the ancestor of bigfoot?

Has anybody thought it might be... well... Gigantopithecus, by any chance? A creature that by the undisputed size of its teeth and jaws had to stand in the range of ten feet or so?

Sounds suspiciously convenient, doesn't it? A giant ape is certain to have lived on Earth for many millions of years, while a giant ape-like

creature is alleged to be currently living in deeply forested areas around the globe. Only people of high intelligence and extensive specialized training would flagrantly ignore such an obvious connection. Only those with, say, anthropological Ph.D.'s could safely deny such a probable likelihood. That's why we pay them the big bucks and hire them to teach our children. They are beyond reproach.

A BIT OF MEA CULPA

I'm being facetious and even a tad mean-spirited here because I want to be certain no one misses the point: Miocene apes are perfect candidates for all the various hominoids that are alleged to live around the world, and not just the bigfoot kind. There are at least three other types of varying sizes (two different man-sized ones and a pygmy type), and quite possibly multiple examples within the four size-based categories (the way there are two distinct types of chimps and gorillas). There seems to be at least three types of bigfoot.

Imagine this scenario: Instead of 50+ Miocene apes, there might have been only, say, a dozen or so, with regional variations classified as 50+ different species due to the scarcity of their fossils. Of those dozen, maybe six were quadrupeds and six were bipeds, with the bipeds being substantially more intelligent, more active, and more wide-ranging than the down-on-all-fours genetic kin. All twelve passed the millennia in their own time-tested fashions and continue living alongside us humans today. None went extinct.

For as radical as that scenario might sound at first, the facts as they exist make it far more logical and probable than the current anthropological dogma that all Miocene apes were quadrupeds, and that despite living in stasis for millions of years, dozens inexplicably went extinct and left only the six we classify today. And please don't harass me with this old saw: "

If hominoids are real, why don't we know about them? Why don't we ever see them? Where are they? Where are their dead bodies?" People who ask such questions are simply ignorant of an astonishing array of valid research and hard data

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that exist but are ignored by mainstream science because it doesn't conform to their current dogma.

We do know about hominoids; we do see them regularly; every single day at some place on the planet some human encounters one or more of them. They are out there living by the thousands...by the hundreds of thousands in order to maintain breeding populations.

But because these facts represent such a severe diminution of our knowledge about the world around us, and equally diminishes our sense of control over everything around us, we are far more comfortable rejecting it as a possibility. When the day comes for some lucky soul to finally cram this blatant reality down our collectively unwilling throats, we will all get up the next day and go to work as we have every day prior. But we will never be the same after that day, not ordinary people and especially not mainstream scientists.

That is why we are not told these things in a truthful, realistic way. Those in positions of power and authority do not believe we can handle it. My contention is that it is they, not us, who can't handle such stark facts...but I could be mistaken. The rampant success of tabloids is a powerful indicator that John and Jane Q. Public might not be quite ready to confront the notion that everything they know about their genesis is stone cold wrong.

Fortunately, the situation isn't subject to indefinite manipulation. No matter how much those in control ignore, reject, or ridicule unacceptable information, it is out there, it is true, and time will eventually prove its reality. Meanwhile, the rest of us can only wait for the next—perhaps final—crack in the dam of fear that keeps us all mired in ignorance.

A NEW DOLPHIN HYBRID

by Darren Naish

The current issue of *BBC Wildlife* (Oct 2001, Vol. 19, no. 10) carries a news story on p. 16 concerning a bizarre new kind of delphinid hybrid. The animal was photographed in December 1998 by Gabriel Rojo and was examined in the field by Rafael Benegas and colleagues at Golfo Nuevo off Argentina (south-west Atlantic).

The dolphin - an excellent photo of it leaping in a cartwheel display is figured - was seen bowriding and associating with a pod of Dusky dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus obscurus*). It was about 2.2 m long, ventrally pure white, dorsally black, with black pectoral flippers and a small, triangular and caudally located dorsal fin. It is very odd looking and clearly reminiscent of *Lissodelphis peronii* though different in several features and also somewhat recalls one of the *Lagenorhynchus* species.

The most parsimonious conclusion is therefore that this is a *Lissodelphis peronii* x *Lagenorhynchus obscurus* hybrid. This is the first record of such a hybrid, though crosses between duskies and *Delphinus* species have been recorded before. The latter is remarkable because *Lagenorhynchus* and *Delphinus* are not close relatives among the Delphinidae. In his 1988 phylogeny of delphinids, Christian de Muizon allocated these two genera to very disparate locations in the delphinid tree. *Delphinus* is apparently closest to *Stenella* and *Tursiops* while *Lagenorhynchus* forms a clade with *Lissodelphis* and *Lagenodelphis*.

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LOCAL LEVIATHANS

by

NEIL ARNOLD

Kent, Sussex and Essex - Three counties steeped in lore. Buried treasure, great battles, murder, mystery and rural beauty. A far cry from vast, cold, icy lakes, or inhospitable mountainous regions, and a millions miles away from tales of rising, coiled serpents or bubbling, frothing lake demons. Or so you would think.

Various cathedrals, crypts and churches around these areas boast peculiar carvings, stone gothic sculptures and fossilised images that would seem to speak of fairytales, myth and bygone eras of exaggerated yarn. There is an apparent contradiction of discovering such bizarre tapestries inside Christian arenas, where fire-breathing forms spout flames at leather-winged gargoyles.

Such houses of the holy are adorned in these 'evil' pictures as if some sadistic graffiti artist from medieval times projected his stone masonry from the inner sanctum of his dark matter instead of aptly decorating such a pure environment.

And for many, such carvings are perceived as religious symbols, as representations of a good versus evil emotion, or vivid sermons of an undiscovered language. And yet whilst many of us may be intrigued by such complex artwork do we ever consider the possibility that such gothic creations may well be assembled as historical accounts of real creatures, *great beasts that have since been driven from the once magnificent forests into the modern world of mythology?*

If ancient carvings from ancient civilisations are accurate then for some reason modern man has either mocked at such wild imaginings or simply ignored or more likely, misunderstood. Whilst every artist has his

own unique hand there are many minds to become confused and to misinterpret, but when understanding tales and sketches from the past we also open a world torn from us and whilst we may never be able to imagine such times, we have to realise that in five-hundred years from now, how will our current ideas and creations be perceived.

If we are quite adequate in our recordings then those that uncover our secrets will have a pretty good idea of how we lived and what we lived with. The same must surely be said not only for our prehistoric ancestors, but those who existed only four to five-hundred years ago. If all wildlife on this precious planet is obliterated within two-hundred years, the humans that inhabit the earth in three-hundred years will find tales of bears, rats, horses, elephants, fish, insects etc quite ridiculous.

Even if one or two species are wiped out, can you imagine what people of the future would make of a description of a jellyfish or an ant-eater. The same must be said with regards to stone-carvings left by those during the 12th century. For, however much interpretation is dredged from such bestial poses, it also becomes informative to the cryptozoologist who gazes wildly at leering scaled serpents and giant felines. And these creatures are more strange in that they are depicted in a Kent church and not some African village where lore is rife.

Sea-serpents, dragons, monster snakes and river entities once inhabited Kent and the surrounding areas, as they probably did the whole country.

Whether encounters with humans were often is difficult to say, but amazingly to this day it would seem that some leviathans still lurk around the Kent coast, occasionally offering themselves as they did so long ago when so many other animals such as wolves and wild cats were native to the gardens. There are records of such bizarre monsters, as I will reveal to you, but such obscure yet fantastic tales are hazed by the passing years and the scepticism. Incidents of today which involve unexplainable and uncategorized creatures are defined as 'paranormal' and either scoffed at or investigated to no real conclusion.

Many of the winged beasts and great serpents have been replaced locally by mysterious felines, ghostly black dogs and across the continent by hairy hominids and vampiric spectres. How would we explain such mysteries to future generations?

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Saint George and the dragon is a popular story never really taken out of mythological context. A medieval mural in Dartford dating back to the 1300s pays homage to this 'battle' of good versus evil which places such as Canterbury cathedral have often drawn from in their carvings without ever acknowledging some cryptozoological puzzle.

There are some two-hundred lakes, rivers, pools and coastal areas in Britain said to be, or once been, inhabited by one beast or another. Many of such creatures reside in areas known for their vast waterways, i.e. Scotland and Ireland and so in comparison the county of Kent is merely a puddle, as are the surrounding counties.

And yet gargantuan forms have been recorded around such dingy lakes, vein-like rivers and small but thick woodlands over the centuries. St. Osyth, Henham, Saffron Walden, Hornden and the appropriately named Wormingsford are all areas within Essex that were once haunted by a phantom of serpentine proportion.

Dragon-like creatures were said to inhabit the forests of Sussex, a county also known for its snake lore but Kent seems to fail in comparison with regards to historical monsters but in more recent history sightings of such abominations have been impressive.

However, the county's most bizarre lake monster event occurred during the fifteenth century and a record of it exists within a chronicle that exists in Canterbury Cathedral's library.

On Friday, 26th September 1449 two enormous reptilian creatures were watched by a number of locals as they fought on the banks of the River Stour, which marked the county borders of Suffolk and Essex. The two beasts were watched for a fair time and the locals noted that one was a reddish and spotted monstrosity, the other, black and the victor as it eventually sapped the life from the other before returning to its weedy lair. Ever since this startling incident the area has been known as Sharpfight Meadow.

Whilst such an event would stick in the minds of many for so long, I find it disappointing that many details are left unmentioned of this particular leviathan combat.

For instance, what did the animals look like? Considering the local folk watched in admiration for so long, the fact that only details of bodily colour seem apparent questions their judgement. How big exactly were these fearsome beasts? Did these creatures spot the witnesses to their struggle? And if such an event can become immortalised in a Canterbury chronicle, why does it seem that no other reports of such creatures exist from that period?

Indeed, from such an era it may be fair to say that such creatures were almost accepted by the locals but also may not have been as fearsome or as exotic as one might think. From this period leading up to the late 1800s, reports of large snakes seem quite common, especially from the Sussex area which over the centuries spawned so many tales of dragons and water-horses.

Firstly though, let us concentrate on another South-East leviathan legend from around that period. It concerns the county of Suffolk, according to a chronicle from 1405, where at Bures, near Sudbury, a huge creature appeared. Vast in body with crested head, teeth of a saw-like nature and an enormously lengthy tail, this rampant reptile slaughtered many sheep throughout the county and in one incident attacked and allegedly ate a shepherd tending to his flock.

Such a monster had often been hunted, tracked and rounded by local archers whose arrows could not penetrate such a leathery hide but it would seem that after several attempts to destroy the flesh-eating demon, the archers could only drive the beast into the local marshes where, fortunately for them, it never returned from.

Again, such a story reeks of fairytale imagination but if such a record does speak the truth then once again details of the creatures appearance are scarce, despite mentions of the teeth, tail and body-size. So, do such records speak of bloody encounters with real dragons, forgotten living dinosaurs or merely fuel modern imaginations which make too much out of minor battles with snakes and lizards? The lore of the Dragon has a history that can be traced right across Europe to China and America but do such magical and wondrous stories merely distort mild encounters with pythons, or salamanders or even alligators or crocodiles?

In Sussex the legend of the Dragon seems confined to the west. Such serpents often considered omens of misfortune, unlucky signs and general mongers of doom

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From the eighth century there are accounts of such creatures, records stored in Anglo-Saxon chronicles which speak of, "... wondrous adders that were to be seen in the land of the South Saxons".

Ethelward's 770AD chronicle gives mention to,

"... monstrous serpents that were seen in the county of the Southern Angles that is called Sussex".

Whilst modern man becomes engrossed by such legends, in his mind they exist in the realm of myth and fantasy, but what is bizarre is the fact that bones of Iguanodon have been unearthed in Tilgate Forest, an area not far from St. Leonard's forest where famous dragon lore was born.

The ancient woodland near Horsham was said to be inhabited by a dragon which was eventually slain by a local hermit during the sixth century, but there was also much mention of giant adders lurking in the undergrowth which were allegedly banished when St. Leonard killed the dragon.

A pamphlet produced in 1614 gives another version of the St. Leonard's Dragon tale in more detail. It claims that the fearsome beast used to have a territory of four miles within which it would consume large amounts of cattle and travellers. The pamphlet also states that the serpent of the forest always left a path of glutinous slime in its wake and that such an ooze would have a foetid reek. Finally there is a detailed account of the creatures size:

"The serpent is reputed to be nine feet, or rather more, in length, and shaped almost in the form of an axeltree of a cart a quantitie of thickness in the middest, and somewhat smaller at both ends.

The former part, which he shoots forth as a neck is supposed to be an elle long; with a white ring, as it were, of scales about it. The scales along his back seem to be blackish, and so much as is discovered under his bellie, appeareth to be red; for I speak of no nearer description than of a reasonable ocular distance. For coming too neare it, hath already beeene too dearly payd for, as you shall heare hereafter".

The creature is also described as having large feet, although the author seems to believe that dragons have no feet and simply glide upon their ribs and scales.

The creature is also perceived as arrogant, almost

standing to attention when detecting prey and upon a great neck looks and listens about

However, the most startling description from the pamphlet mentions, "... on either side of him discovered, two great bunches so big as a large foote-ball and (as some think) will in time grow to wings". And so, such a record would seem to describe something akin to the Jabberwocky, a great, leathery winged beast unlike any animal ever native to this county or country.

The pamphlet read like a modern day crypto-chronicle, detailing witnesses, the diet of the animal(rabbits), attacks on livestock and domestic pets and further sightings of other serpentine creatures.

Another pamphlet, entitled *A True Relation of a Monstrous Serpent seen at Henham (Essex) on the Mount in Saffron Waldon*, spoke in detail of a reptilian animal sighted several times during the Spring and Summer (particularly May) of 1669.

There is no telling if such serpents were ever slain by members of the local community but such heroic tales make for good, pleasant night-time reading. Indeed, if the truth be known, such beasts would have merely moved cross country to seek more food and shelter because a four-mile territory wouldn't be sufficient for a fox let alone a mammoth dragon.

If such creatures were factual forms then like so many mysterious creatures upon this globe, they would have been misunderstood, elusive, in some cases slain or died a natural death in some remote cave. And the possibilities would have become endless if such monsters did indeed have wings.

The next set of leviathan tales of any detail emerged during the 1700s and 1800s. A change in cultural beliefs may well have turned the dragons of the past into great snakes, or indeed both of these creatures co-inhabited the South-Eastern counties. Sussex history tells of an encounter at Hayward's Heath around 1794 when a huge snake, which had terrorised locals and livestock, was shot dead.

The fact that this 'monster' only reached five-feet in length disappoints the modern researcher who becomes disillusioned by such tales of gargantuan beasts. Whilst such records cannot be totally dismissed, it would seem that many of the creatures involved in the scare-stories

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measured between five and nine-feet in length and seem more snake-like than dragon.

The report from the Heath also speaks of the various witnesses who encountered the 'beast' and their mention that the creature always disappeared under the earth when approached. This is hardly the behaviour of a flesh-eating monster, or indeed a dragon... or indeed an errant king snake.

Another report, this time from 1867, within the woodlands of Fittleworth, Sussex, concerns another strange creature far more snake-like once again, especially in the fact that it often hissed and spat at those who accidentally stumbled upon its lair.

The creature was never said to have harmed a soul though and so once again the legend of the dragon sinks into fantasy and the reality of the snake, possibly an adder, comes to life, turning the incident into a rather mild and vague nature tale.

Strangeness around Fittleworth does not end there though.

Also around the same time, and with possible relation to the same animal, various locals had horrifying experiences with an 'oudaciously large' (as described in Sussex dialect) 'dragon' which inhabited a lair near a pathway and would never let anyone pass without omitting a terrifying hiss and putrefying stench which always drove the unfortunate traveller back from whence he came.

I imagine that the pathway must have become awfully overgrown and a perfect hideaway for such a creature considering no-one ever managed to walk the area and to wear away such a route. Again though, I believe some kind of snake, probably an adder was responsible because whilst so many villagers were frightened of the creature, there are no reports of anyone being eaten or descriptions of a roaming beast of massive proportions. No dragon, however elusive, could reside next to a pathway and not be hunted to extinction.

Whilst on the subject of Fittleworth, there also comes the weird tale of the puck bird which also terrorised the locals around the same time. Folklore paints a picture of the winged horror as some kind of spirit or demon that reminds me of the modern day Chupacabras.

The puck bird had all the traits of some spectral creature, mainly in the way it used to just appear out of nowhere to inflict disease upon cattle. Whether it actually attacked these animals is not clear but the strange omen of doom was a certain bad sign for the superstitious folk who often believed that if the bird was ever to appear, one must never attempt to walk past it or to overtake it. Sussex lore also mentions that the 'puck' was another name for the Devil himself.

With so much supposedly fictional artwork protruding eerily from places such as Canterbury Cathedral and Leicestershire's SS Mary and Hardulph church, we cannot pretend that such caricatures are of ordinary animals indigenous to the British Isles.

None of our current wildlife are bestowed with long-necks or indeed bipedal as depicted in the Leicestershire carvings which clearly show animals with great hind legs and two smaller fore-limbs whilst large, long-necked quadrupeds feed in the background on plants and trees. And these unknown species sit so comfortably alongside more recognisable birds and humans as if they shared the environment not so long ago.

Judging by even more recent accounts of huge serpents and other aquatic odd-bodies it would seem that the Loch Ness monster has many relatives which not only inhabit grim, remote lakes but also the vast oceans.

Unfortunately such cases have well and truly been drowned by the Nessie enigma, a 'monster' made immortal despite whatever is proven or disproved in the future. Indeed, many authors quote the first Nessie sighting from the year AD 656 when St Columba supposedly cast the beast backed to the depths of the inky waters after it attacked a swimmer, but as recent as the eighteenth century people have been attacked by lake gargoyles.

A man swimming at a lake called Lyn-y-Gader, in Snowdon, Wales was eaten by a leviathan in front of his friends who watched from the shore as a long object approached the man, raised its head and pulled him down to his watery grave, wrapped within its oily coils.

Even more recently, and certainly more local, at Rye in Sussex, as chronicled in a 1926 work, a courting couple were walking their dog one evening across a field when a peculiar horse-like creature with great staring eyes galloped past them. The man pursued the animal in time

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to see it leap a fence and to splash into a large, deep pool. Whether such an apparition ever existed in reality is another thing. Water horses and kelpies are not common to the South-East but then again neither were dragons, phantom felines or giant snakes.

Those who take the stone carvings seriously translate them as complex human emotions and literally cloud any other interpretation which may lie within. For stone-masons to sculpt sadistic images of confronting dragons, figures being attacked and devoured by serpents, and ape-like bipedal of unknown species, does not, for me anyway, represent human instincts, or in the case of woodland deity carvings, symbolise lust.

When the Danes and the Norwegians spoke of such beasts they never translated great battles as conflicting emotions but recorded such encounters as one would nowadays if they stumbled across a big cat in British woodland.

Basically, if records of ancient origin exist with regards to serpent and lake monster encounters then indeed such incidents must have occurred. 336 BC is the date of the first account of a reptilian Leviathan encounter, involving King Morvidus of Wales who was consumed by a monster which was eventually slain by Peredur, the son of Earl Efrawg, at a place called Llyn Llion.

However, it would seem that the same sort of dragon was encountered in Wales around 1693 on the River Conwy and was also killed.

It would seem that the South-East counties monster lore exists on few and far between recorded encounters which seem no more credible than the existence of the griffin of Brentford or the Mothman of Hythe. However, sightings of Leviathans from the coastal regions, and very recently too, seem to suggest that it is the great salted waters which still offer such monstrous surprises.

During February 1993 several on-lookers witnessed a long-necked animal swimming slowly in the Northern part of the Thames Estuary at Leigh-On-Sea at Essex. More details of the sighting were not available, such as size or colouration, but seven years later I was told of an amazing serpent sighting whilst interviewing a local man from Canterbury with regards to a black leopard encounter in 2000. The witness to the 1999 sea-monster is a highly respected and known author on

fishing often works for local radio and television. His sighting as follows;

"I was fishing off Folkestone Pier with a fellow angler when in the distance we saw a black object. I looked through my binoculars and saw a huge animal that I can only describe as a sea-serpent. The creature was roughly one-hundred feet long and seemed to be diving and then resurfacing. We both watched it for about thirty minutes and it was so ridiculously large that I laughed and did not tell anyone else about it. The animal had a long neck, moved very slowly and looked all the world like the Loch Ness Monster plesiosaur. It was massive".

A two-hour telephone conversation seemed to convince me that what the witness saw was indeed a huge sea creature of some sort. The witness had spent a full hour talking to me about his angling adventures but only when I mentioned sea-serpents did he mumble something along the lines of, "... I know what is down there".

Such a comment intrigued me to ask more. Whilst a one-hundred foot Leviathan of the deep seems too immense, let us look at two other strange sightings from the Kent coast which took place at the beginning of the twentieth century and the middle part. These reports have been aired in Graham J. McEwan's excellent 1978 book, "*Sea Serpents, Sailors and Sceptics*".

The first encounter took place in 1912 from St. Margaret's Bay, Kent. The report is vague but concerned a Mr. Stone and 'others' who saw a serpent which the author categorises as a long-necked seal.

During 1950 a similar creature was spotted at Cliftonville, Kent by a John Handley. Indeed, around this period many so-called serpent sightings were later considered long-necked seals and such a creature may well have been responsible for an encounter in Suffolk from 1938 when on the morning of October 21, two men, Ernest Watson and William Herrington, went out in their boat to lay nets but were shocked by the appearance of a grey, long-necked, sixty-foot long beast.

As they returned to land the animal thrust its neck out of the water some thirty metres away before shooting off at great speed (thirty knots, allegedly) before diving below, leaving a commotion amongst the waves.

The encounter made the headlines not just locally but nationwide with the Daily Mail and Mirror doing articles

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on the incident. It also seemed to echo the sighting of a long-necked animal seen June 1931 by a Mrs Sybil Armstrong at Thorpeness, Suffolk. It would seem that the Thames Estuary is the most likely place for a large, sea animal to be seen.

Whilst the 1993 sighting was brief, during the Summer of 1923 a Captain Haselfoot and crew of HMS Kellett were surveying an area of the estuary known as Black Deep. It was around nine o'clock in the morning when they observed a long neck rise out of the water some two-hundred yards away from the ship. The neck was around seven-feet high and seemed to submerge and then resurface on a number of occasions.

Interestingly enough, the area where the creature was sighted had been closed to shipping for over eight years so had the Kellett disturbed the lair, or resting place of this creature?

Captain Haselfoot also managed to sketch the creatures neck, and what appeared to be a head. It is difficult to get any information from the drawing which simply shows a black long neck, a small head and what appears to be a mouth either with whiskers, some sort of beard or what could merely have been dripping water.

It is the classic 'Nessie' head and certainly not of a long-necked seal.

Graham J. McEwan discussed in length the possibility that the Long-necked Seal could well solve the mystery behind many 'monster' sightings. Such an animal would have, obviously, the long-neck, a small seal-like head, a bulky body lacking distinct tail, four large flippers and a vertical undulation, as well as reaching lengths of around sixty-feet.

The creature is likely to be a pinniped due to the fact that it has webbed feet or flippers, an absence of tail and sea-lion-like can bound across land. It is also said to leave a greasy wake.

However, the 1999 sighting from Folkestone sounds more like a prehistoric monster rather than large seal. It would seem that the Water-horse fits the description, as it does with the HMS Kellett incident in which Captain Haselfoot seemed to sketch bristle-like protrusions on the chin.

Again, the Water-horse would vertically undulate, at times have a maned neck and also boast two front flippers. Again, the creature would belong to the same family as the walruses and seals rather than being some Plesiosaur in a time warp! This is also the type of creature more likely to reach one-hundred feet in length.

Other possibilities of such ocean leviathans lie with everything from giant eels, huge turtles, Zueglodons, elephant seals, oarfish (which rarely surface) etc, etc.

However, the more exciting species concerns those that are seen in lakes, pools and rivers... or not around water at all. Snakes, giant catfish, lizards or indeed unknown and now extinct creatures could well explain the scattered reports from the South-East over the centuries. If such accepted creatures such as catfish and lizards had been responsible for such folktales though, then surely stone-masons would have carved accurately as they did with other sculptures. I find it bizarre that after so many years many ancient paintings and carvings still cannot be deciphered by our experts. It would seem that dragons and 'monsters' did haunt the seas and lakes, but such times have been hazed by the constant misinterpretations.

And so to the present day and the serpents and dragons seem mere whispers on the wind.

However, as recently as July 2001 a mysterious, smooth skinned monster was spotted in a Kent river. The River Darent at Eynsford had attracted many anglers and newspapers in the hope of fishing out a dark-skinned predator which was consuming the native residents on a route from Westerham through to west Kent, to Dartford and then into the Thames Estuary. The prime suspect for such obliteration was a Wels catfish, estimated to be five-feet in length and caught but put back by a fifteen-year-old local boy named Oliver Parker-Grater.

The forty-pound fish was released back into the river simply because Oliver never realised how dangerous it could be to other wildlife, causing alarm to the Kent Fisheries Team who believe that the fish could well cause damage to domestic pets and young children.

Fishing expeditions were sent out to catch the monster fearing it would be a threat to the native brown trout. Adrian Saunders of the Fisheries Team said the fish must be caught immediately:

He said:

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"My suspicion is that he has swum down river towards the Dartford Creek area and could even be in the River Thames. Small rivers like the Darent are not the natural habitat of catfish. It is a very ugly fish with a huge bulbous head and a wide slash of a mouth lined with hundreds of razor-sharp teeth. They are very strong and put up a huge fight."

He added:

"It is likely this has been put into the river illegally for someone's angling fun but it can be a threat to the environment making a big impact on local fish stocks". So, will a five-foot long catfish go down in the folklore records alongside an elusive five-foot long snake? Probably not.

Whether there has ever been a connection between ancient, local carvings of dragons, serpents and reptilian beasts and historical encounters with similar creatures we will never know but there is one sculpture within Canterbury Cathedral that I wish to pay special attention to.

It is that of a huge feline, which has been officially recognised as a panther. The sculpture shows a muscular feline strangely breathing fire but there is no doubt that it is a wild cat of some kind. The carving has been translated as follows:

"If we assume that we have here another example of the Panther breathing out the fire of the Sweet Breath of Innocence, then again it is Good overcoming Evil".

Make of such a Christian translation what you will but if the Panther does indeed represent any kind of reality and goodness as one, let us hope that the many which currently inhabit Kent and the surrounding counties are not as fearsome as the dragons and serpents as before.

For such a phenomenon proves just how ironic some of those carvings are, even if they were the work of a mere medieval jester. I'm just not sure who is having the last laugh.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son..."

-finis-

Secret Archives

The Foot-and-Mouth Crisis: The Controversy Grows

By

Nick Redfern

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is unarguable that the epidemic of foot and mouth disease which swept most of the UK in the first half of the year 2001 was the greatest natural disaster to face these islands in many years. It is surprising that there were not more farrean ramifications to the case, but in this article Nick Redfern did a jolly good job of finding some. However, it is also worth noting that it was written long before the anthrax attacks in the US. Be afraid....

In an intriguing and unexpected twist on the current foot-and-mouth disease crisis that continues to afflict the entire country, Top Secret papers have surfaced under the terms of the United States Government's Freedom of Information Act showing that more than 50 years ago, American authorities were concerned that a potentially-hostile nation would attempt to cripple the US food-chain by deliberately infecting the country's cattle herd with foot-and-mouth.

Prepared by the Committee on Biological Warfare at the request of the American Government's elite Research and Development Board, the 50-page file in question dates from March 1947 through to the latter part of 1948 and makes for disturbing reading.

According to the documents at issue: "Biological warfare lends itself especially well to undercover operations, particularly because of the difficulty in detecting such operations and because of the versatility possible by the proper selection of biological warfare agents."

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The Committee continued: "Within the last few years there have been several outbreaks of exotic diseases and insect pests which are believed to have been introduced accidentally but which could have been introduced intentionally had someone wished to do so. The use of epizootic agents against our animal population by sabotage methods is a very real and immediate danger. Foot-and-mouth disease and rinderpest are among those which would spread rapidly, and unless effective counter-measures were immediately applied, would seriously affect the food supply of animal origin."

Grimmer still is the following extract:

" Since foot-and-mouth is now present in Mexico, it would be relatively easy for saboteurs to introduce the disease into the United States and have this introduction appear as natural spread from Mexico.

Since rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease are not present in the United States, our animal population is extremely vulnerable to these diseases."

Alarmingly, the papers reveal, the US was (and logic dictates, still is) in no position to prevent a large-scale biological attack via foot-and-mouth disease had it indeed occurred: "The United States is particularly vulnerable to this type of attack.

It is believed generally that espionage agents of foreign countries which are potential enemies of the United States are present already in this country.

There appears to be no great barrier to prevent additional espionage agents from becoming established here and there is no control over the movements of people within the United States."

The document continues: "North America is an isolated land mass and hence specific areas therein present feasible biological warfare targets for an extra-continental enemy since fear of backfiring is minimised."

Most disturbing, however, was the potential outlook for the USA in the event of a country-wide biological warfare attack utilising foot-and-mouth disease and similar devastating diseases. "The food supply of the nation could be depleted to an extent which materially would reduce the nation's capacity to defend itself and to wage war. Serious outbreaks of disease of man, animals or plants also would result in profound psychological disturbances."

But how would a covert introduction of foot-and-mouth disease into the US food-chain by a hostile nation be undertaken? The Committee had a number of ideas: via "water contamination"; "fodder and food"; "infected bait"; "contamination of soil"; "Biological Warfare aerosols"; and deliberate "contamination of veterinary pharmaceuticals and equipment".

The results envisaged back in 1948 parallel precisely and eerily with what we are seeing in the UK today:

- "a reduction of meat supply";
- "disruption of economic balance";
- "reduction of animal transport"; and most illuminating of all:
- "Establishment of a source of infection for man."

Realising the potentially-grave implications that such a scenario presented, the United States' Government carefully and quietly began to initiate a number of plans to try and combat any possible attack on the continental United States that might have occurred.

Recommending that a special unit should be established to deal with the situation, the Committee asserted that ventilation shafts, subway systems and water supplies throughout the country should be carefully monitored.

Similarly, the Committee stated, steps should be taken to determine "the extent to which contamination of stamps, envelopes, money, cosmetics, food and beverages as a means of subversively disseminating biological agents is possible."

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In addition to preparing for the worst from a defensive perspective, however, US authorities were not above planning their own biological warfare operations from an offensive standpoint. "Major goals and objectives of a research and development programme in the field of offensive special biological warfare operations include:

- (1) Development of new agents suitable for special operations;
- (2) Development of methods of dissemination for special BW operations;
- (3) Determination of effectiveness and feasibility of methods of dissemination; and
- (4) Estimation of approximate dosages required for specific special BW operations."

But it was in the conclusions of the Committee's report on the use of foot-and-mouth disease and other diseases as a biological weapon that the utter lack of defence against such an attack was spelled out. "It is concluded that:

- (1) Biological agents would appear to be well adapted to subversive use.
- (2) The United States is particularly susceptible to attack by special BW operations.
- (3) The subversive use of biological agents by a potential enemy prior to a declaration of war presents a grave danger to the United States.
- (4) The biological warfare research and development programme is not now authorised to meet the requirements necessary to prepare defensive measures against special BW operations."

Until now, the idea that our current foot-and-mouth crisis could be anything other than a tragic accident is one that would have been dismissed as rank paranoia.

With this formerly-Top Secret US Government document now in the public domain, however, we would do well to remember that there are other ways to bring a country to its knees than via the bullet and the bomb.

DORSET HORSE RIPPING

Thanks to Mark North for sending this in. Whilst we usually tend to agree with Kevin McClure and doubt the relevance of fortean investigation of animal mutilation stories, this one is slightly different. Most such attacks are perpetrated by vicious individuals or gangs of people. However some, like this one, do seem to adhere strictly to the original syndrome of injuries first described in the USA over thirty years ago. It is for this reason that we include this story here. It was first published in the Dorset Echo

(www.thisisdorset.net/dorset/archive/2001),
Wednesday 13 June 2001:

A NEW-BORN foal, meant as a present for a four-year-old boy, was taken from its mother and butchered in a nearby field. Today its shocked owner told how the Arab-Welsh Cob cross had its stomach ripped open, internal organs removed and an ear slashed off in a horrific night-time attack.

The helpless animal belonged to Peggy Hughes, 37, of Crepe Farm, Symondsbury, near Bridport, and was to be given to her son Caleb, four. Mrs Hughes' brother, Philip Hughes, who found the dead animal, said: "We came across one of its ears cut off and it had its belly cut open."

Mrs Hughes, 37, said: "It would take someone who is very sick in their mind to do this. It's a mystery." The mother of the foal is very distressed. She's standing up at the top of the field and won't come down. "My little boy is very upset. He would visit the mother every day before the birth."

"I don't know who could do something like this. I've never known anything like it before. "I feel so sick and saddened. That foal was as defenceless as a new-born baby. It couldn't fight back. It must have suffered dreadfully."

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The foal was born after midnight on Saturday morning in a field near the farm and by 6am was missing. It was found 24 hours later.

Mrs Hughes said: "Horses don't like people around them when they give birth, so we left the mother in the field at about midnight. When we came back in the morning, she had obviously had the foal because the afterbirth was there. But the foal was missing. "It looked as if it had been dragged away through stinging nettles and brambles. After my brother found it I didn't want to see it. It was very upsetting."

The foal has now been buried. Mrs Hughes said the animal had little financial worth and no farm buildings were damaged.

PC Simon Herfitt, of Dorset Police, said: "There was a great big sweeping cut across the lower part of the body, as big as two footballs. The organs were missing and there was a section of skin missing.

The cuts were very clean as if they'd been done with a knife."

Anyone who may have any information on the attack should call Bridport Police Station on (01308) 422266.

First published on Friday 15 June 2001:

AN ANIMAL lover has put up a £3,000 reward after a new-born foal was taken from its mother and slaughtered in a nearby field.

Horrific pictures in Wednesday's *Dorset Echo* prompted an anonymous donor to come forward with the cash offer for information leading police to an arrest.

The helpless animal, meant as a present for a four-year-old boy, was just hours

old when it was taken from its mother and carved up in a nearby field.

The Arab-Welsh Cob cross had an ear slashed off, its stomach ripped open and internal organs removed.

PC Simon Herfitt of Bridport police, said he was called early yesterday by a Dorset woman, who made the offer, but wished to remain anonymous.

Peggy Hughes, 37, of Crepe Farm, Symondsbury, who owned the foal, said she was 'shocked' when told of the reward.

"That is brilliant news. I'm overwhelmed, speechless," she said. "I don't know what to say. It's just so nice to know that there are people out there who care. It just shows there are more nice people in the world than bad."

She said she was still coming to terms with the gruesome attack.

"It doesn't seem real. I didn't want to see the foal when my brother found it, but when I was looking at the pictures in the *Dorset Echo*, it was like a bad dream," she said.

"Deep down I think whoever did this needs to go and see someone about it. They can't be right. They shouldn't be walking the streets. How could they do this to a new-born animal? It was just like a baby."

She said she had no idea who was behind the foal's death. Police ruled out another animal having performed the killing because the cuts to the foal were too clean.

Mrs Hughes said her son, Caleb, had suffered nightmares since the attack and she had promised to find him another foal.

The mother of the murdered animal was recovering well, Mrs Hughes said.

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LETTERS TO YER EDITOR

The Editor and his band of merry men welcome an exchange of correspondence on any subject of interest to readers of this magazine. We reserve the right to edit letters and would like to stress that opinions voiced are those of the individual correspondent rather than being necessarily those of the editorial team or the Centre for Fortean Zoology. Every attempt is made not to infringe anyone's moral rights or copyright, and we apologise if we have unwittingly done so.

THE AMOROUS HUMPHREY PFLUGG

Hi Chaps

Just read the latest Animals and Men. Very good. The Phelps Lake (Saskatchewan, Canada) fish is no mystery. It is a charr *Salvelinus* sp. although it is difficult to tell which exact species. The original web page this story appeared on suggested they consulted some fish iologists. Well, they couldn't have been very good. The fish has an adipose fin which in freshwaters means it is almost certainly a Salmoniform and the white edges of the anal and pelvic fins suggest the genus *Salvelinus*.

Charles Paxton

PLASTIC PALACE ALICE

Editor's note: As many of you will be aware I have been very unwell for much of the last year or two and so have not always been able to capitalise to the most optimum extent on opportunities that came my way. Doc telephoned me late one night and suggested a course of action to me. Unfortunately I was taken ill again the next day and couldn't follow up on it. However, he wrote to me a few days later and I am printing relevant excerpts from his letter...

Dear Boy,

You really should have paid more attention last week, when I tried to say something about Pat Kelly's August 1981 photograph of the Lough Learne Wurrum. Anniversaries of this kind can be very useful to fortean journalists such as yourself. A few days after Puck Fair, this year, (and twenty years ago), I poked around the shores of Lough Learne mainly on what is called Ross Island but is actually a Peninsula (Ross = Promontory or Ness!!) Chris and I had a picnic with a few bottles by Ross Castle. I mention this because the castle was a stronghold of O'Donohue Mor Centuries ago. He is said to have found a gateway to an enchanted land in the lake (see *The Legend of O'Donahue* by Croft and Crokes). Guarded by a great water beast, peiste or worm. The

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same monster is supposed to guard the sunken treasure of O'Donahue and I mention it because Patrick Kelly's ancestor (as he claimed) earless Edward, was necromantically treasure seeking with Dr Dee in 1581, 400 years before young Patrick did his thing at Lough Learne. Another anniversary?

(Check page 202 of Ted Holliday's *The Dragon and the Disc*)

There's a GS involved - Great Snakes!

By the way, Finn MacCool battled with the monster of Lough Learne simply ages ago. Tall tales? Here's the next "coincidence" for you: There are old copper mines to the south of Ross Island said to be the oldest in Europe. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the workings were managed by Rudolph Raspe, famous teller of tall tales, author of the *Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*. Raspe is buried in Killegy graveyard just half a mile from the lake's shore. It would be tempting to connect the tunnels of the mine workings with that enchanted land under the lake if only because of another amusing little link which would appeal to fans of the *Shaver Mystery* and its cavern dwelling deros - There's a coach company based in Killarney called Dero's.

There's another fortean anniversary coming up very soon. On November 17th it will be 25 years since Dave Clarke and I photographed Morgawr in the Helford. Interestingly on the same day in 1976 the Megamouth Shark was photographed for the very first time. What a neat coincidence?

Yes I certainly plan to be in Scotland at Loch Ness around May 21st 2002. As for the monster popping up during my visit lets just say "It remains to be seen" - The trip will be merely a small part of a much larger sea head case but I'll be armed with a camera, (still and video) plus my salty surrealchemist skills. Actually I've already photographed Nessie. I'd be more interested in getting pics of Shiels (or Seilagh), the beastie of Loch Shiel.

Also, because of my surname, I have a strong link with that particular elemental location. Maybe I'll be "strong triumphant" (see *Monstrum* p.42) if fireworks are employed. We shall see.

If we meet at Loch Ness, (Fort Augustus, Invermorrison. Drummadrochit wherever) I'll buy you

a drink. It must be my round. There'll be no need for you to provide naked witches but thanks for the kind offer. I have my own connections in Inverness.

So - there we are. Maybe some of this information is potentially useful to you. Send me a copy of *Animals & Men* if you're so inclined.

Slainté

Tony "Doc" Shiels

BIG LOUISE

Jon

I liked the *Joy Division* letters to the editor.

Dave, Luton

EDITOR'S NOTE: A phone in prize of my choice to the first person who rings me on 01392 424811 and tells me the answer to this question. This issue, why and who? Heee Heee Heee

HIS MOTHER CALLED HIM IVAN AND THEN SHE DIED

Dear Jon,

..... *Tonight we sail for Singapore* ... well, Kuala Lumpur actually, but its pretty close. Yes, its off to Malaysia for this jaded old fortean. My current researches tend to be in the field of traditional zoology rather than crypto but I'll keep my eye out for any interesting snippets of animal related folklore.

By the way, I hugely enjoyed the letter from Ken Bateman in the last issue (24): Telepathic communication with giant alien insects from "a foreign region of space-time" Whatever stuff this guy is on, Jon, could you order me 15 kg of it at your earliest opportunity. Please advise on whether it is smoked, snorted, injected or carried into the bloodstream by trained squadrons of mutant nanocephalopods...

Keep on the trail

Mike Grayson,

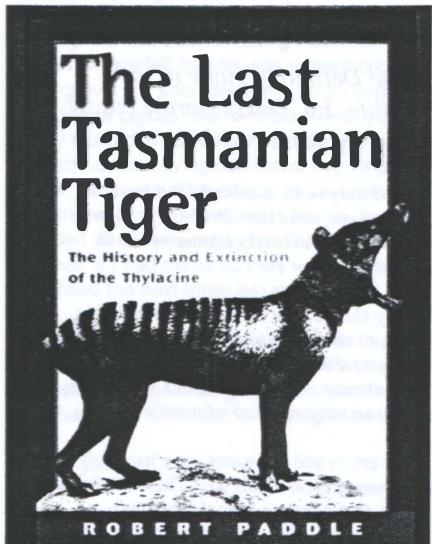
London

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Book Reviews

The Last Tasmanian Tiger: The History and Extinction of the Thylacine.

Robert Paddle Cambridge University Press 2000



There can be no doubt that Paddle has produced the most comprehensive work on the thylacine ever written. The book is an astounding piece of research that has uncovered forgotten photographs, papers, and interviews with farmers, hunters, naturalists, and people from all walks of life who witnessed and experienced the thylacine first hand.

In the past authors have based their books on information gleaned on the animal from captive specimens and accounts running up to and after its supposed extinction. Paddle however bases his research on what was written whilst the thylacine was still in official existence and in most cases still common.

The work blows away many misconceptions that have been rewritten from book to book. For example the thylacine took relatively few sheep. Tasmanian aborigines killed far more sheep than the Tasmanian wolf ever did. The animal was made a scapegoat when the sheep farming industry collapsed due to the stupidity of officialdom. Too many sheep were being kept in a land not used to such intense grazing.

We also learn that the thylacine was a social animal that hunted in family groups not the lone killer it is often portrayed as. Thylacines also *did* breed in captivity, as photos of adorable pups show. The animal was tameable and some were kept as pets.

What of thylacine survival today? Paddle acknowledges sightings in both Tasmania and mainland Australia but says he needs a specimen (preferably living) for proof. One wonders if he knows fellow scientists like Hans Naarding have seen thylacines? Interestingly in the light on mainland sightings today, Paddle produces evidence that thylacines were indeed surviving in Victoria well into the 19th century. A must for all interested in the "world's healthiest extinct animal". RICHARD FREEMAN

The Monster of the Madidi: Searching for the Giant Ape of the Bolivian Jungle
Simon Chapman Aurum Press 2001

Strange tales of a creature called the "Mono ray" or king monkey, a supposed giant primate, lure a Lancashire physics teacher in to the uncharted green hell of the Bolivian jungle. This is a compelling book. Chapman has little money and his expedition is truly run on a wing and a prayer. Together with his friend Julian and Charlie a mad Australian angler searching for big game fish, he pits himself against nature like a Victorian explorer.

Chapman's bravery and determination really impress. He overcomes everything from useless guides to the fact his canoe did not arrive until days after he did. He gets lost in the jungle, faces black caiman, puma, and the notorious genital eating catfish, and explores *terra incognita*.

The book is so well written that the reader shares in Chapman's hopes, his despairs, and his excitement. He really is an Englishman of the old school, Boys Own, adventurer mould. He did not find his monster but the

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book is well worth reading despite this. Strangely he does not really speculate as to what the animal is beside a possible giant spider monkey. His faith in the De Loys photo is unfortunate as this is quite obviously nothing more than a female red faced black spider monkey. But apart from this his narrative is gripping.

As for the "Mono ray" it is probably not an ape, a monkey, or any sort of primate. I believe the Neotropical "hominid" reports refer to giant ground sloths. RICHARD FREEMAN

The Sasquatch Triangle Revisited



By Don Keating
Cover Artwork By Larry Battson

This is a self published book by the well known Ohio bigfooter. It charts his interest and investigations into the sasquatch from 1977 to 1992. It is actually a rewritten form of an earlier book. The triangle of the title has its points in the counties of Tuscarawas, Coshocton, and Guernsey where most of Keatings field research has been done.

The book includes his early communications with John Green, the sasquatch's greatest champion and an interesting history of Newcoerstown that lies slap in

the middle of our hairy friend's territory. The rest of the book is broken into several sections. One deals with eyewitness reports. Keating has been lucky enough to spot his quarry more than once. The next deals with foot prints and footprint casts. The final part follows the accidental filming of a huge white sasquatch as it walks past a car. I have not seen this footage so I cannot comment upon it. A documentary about the film is available from the author.

Don Keating
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Newcomerstown, Ohio
43832-0205
USA

RICHARD FREEMAN

Animal – The Definitive guide to the world's wildlife Ed. David Burnie (editor in chief) Dorling Kindersly 2001

Sumptuous is the only word to describe this beautiful book. Over 624 pages, more than 2000 of the planets inhabitants are recorded in lovely photographs and informative text.

Experts on every class contributed to this unmissable book. It is truly invaluable as a reference work and is written in a manner that the none zoologist layman can read without confusion.. The price tag of £35 seems a bargain for such an attractive and informative book.

There are a few errors and omissions but a hand full were bound to creep into a book of this size. These are few and far between and do not detract from the fact that "Animal" is a splendid effort. You cannot fail to miss it in the shops as the cover sports the colourful face of a male mandrill that glares down from the shelves.
RICHARD FREEMAN

The Butterflies of Hong Kong by M J Basscombe, G Johnston, F S Bascombe Academic Press 1999

Do you like butterflies? Do you like Hong Kong? Then you will love The Butterflies of Hong Kong. RICHARD FREEMAN

EDITORIAL COMMENT: Richard Shut Up

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As regular readers of this magazine will be aware, I was brought up in what was then the Crown Colony of Hong Kong and have been studying its wildlife and cryptozoology for many years. Until now the only book on the subject was the one with the same title first written by Maj J.C.S. Marsh RA FRES in 1960, which has been out of print since the second edition in 1968.

An awful lot has happened to the zoogeography of the region in the intervening years not the least being the political transfer of power in 1997, the establishment of Hong Kong as a signatory to the RAMSAR Convention, and the establishment of the Shenzhen special economic zone.

Whole swathes of land which were paddy fields when Marsh wrote his book are now concreted industrial wastelands and in a surprising twist, the population drift to the cities has meant that large swathes of previously agriculturalised land has now become wasteland and will, within a few generations be rainforest.

Another twist is that the closely tended feng shui woods of these isolates villages especially those in the Mai Po marshes or on the Sai Kung peninsula (which were often cited as being the last true swathes of indigenous HK afforestation) are no longer tended and have spread with equally interesting results on their zoofauna.

It is this enormous shift in the ecology of the region rather than the long unavailability of the original book that has made this new book such an essential purchase. Even at a price of well over a hundred quid it is still an invaluable scientific document. Unlike Marsh's original, it covers the ecology and biology of these rare and beautiful creatures as well as the mere taxonomic spread.

One of the most fascinating things about it is the way that whole new species and even genera have been discovered in the years since Marsh and that some species that he described as rare are actually now quite common.

One glaring example of this is the recent discovery of a second species of Birdwing Butterfly from the region – something unsuspected by the likes of Marsh. An excellent book which is unimpeachable for all naturalists interested in the region. JON DOWNES

Encyclopaedia of Dinosaurs by Philip J Currie Kevin Padian (editors) Academic Press 1997

Academic Press rarely miss the mark and this is no exception. The editors have brought together some of the finest palaeontologists in the world to work on this detailed book. Names like Ken Carpenter, Dale Russel and Dong Zhiming will be well known to dinosaur buffs. The text has an alphabetical lay out with useful labels that slot the text into categories such as types of dinosaur, dinosaur institutions, research methods, dinosaur biology and geology and sites. All the entries are cross referenced to make for easier research. Colour illustrations (and even black and white diagrams) are few but attractive and well painted. The casual punter would almost certainly find this book far to heavy and academic, but hey this is Academic Press. As a dinosaur lover I found it a boon. RICHARD FREEMAN.

Newts and Salamanders of Europe by Richard A Griffiths (Poyser Natural History Books)

The late great Bernard Heuvelmans once told us that there were lost worlds everywhere. I don't know whether even he could have foreseen the massive rewriting of European Herpetology that has taken place over the last ten years or so. New species have been discovered, species thought not to exist in isolated geographical areas such as the United Kingdom and Denmark have been discovered alive and well and the biology of well known animals such as the Olm has proven to be far more exciting and diverse than had previously been thought.

Read as a textbook this book is an interesting addition to anyone's bookshelf, but seen as a proto-cryptozoological text it is absolutely fascinating..

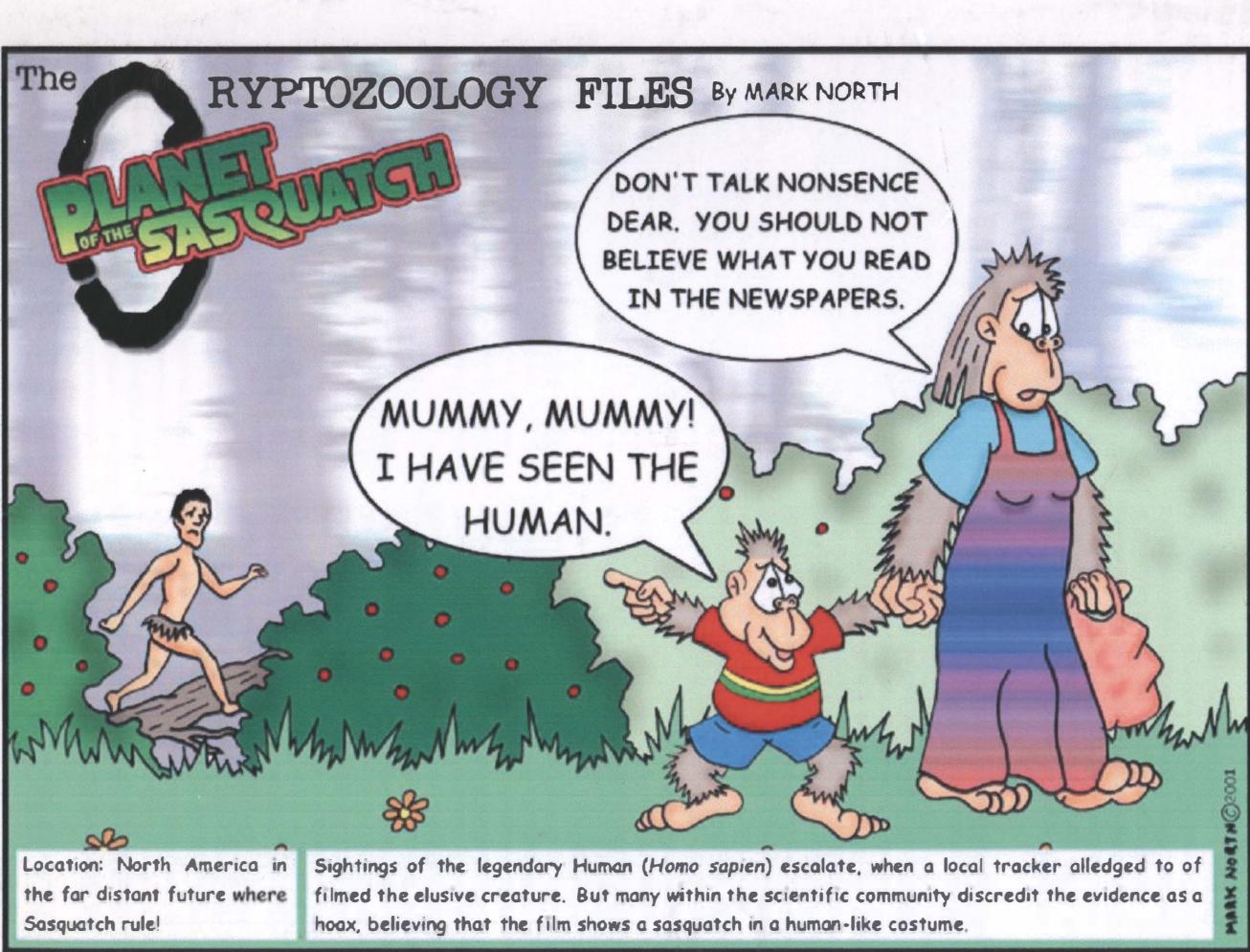
It opens up a wide range of possibilities as well as shedding light on some of the more abstruse details of the physiology and biology of the European tailed amphibians, it provides exciting fuel for the mental fires of those who suspect that creatures such as the tatzelwurm have a physical objective reality, and may yet be discovered in one of the more far flung portions of the *Alpes Maritime*. JON DOWNES

The

CRYPTOZOLOGY FILES

By MARK NORTH

PLANET OF THE SASQUATCH



Location: North America in
the far distant future where
Sasquatch rule!

Sightings of the legendary Human (*Homo sapien*) escalate, when a local tracker alledged to of
filmed the elusive creature. But many within the scientific community discredit the evidence as a
hoax, believing that the film shows a sasquatch in a human-like costume.

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Typeset by the Boyslings Children
"...as much as they can and then some"